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THE HISTORY OF METHODISM

BY

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BRITISH
METHODISM



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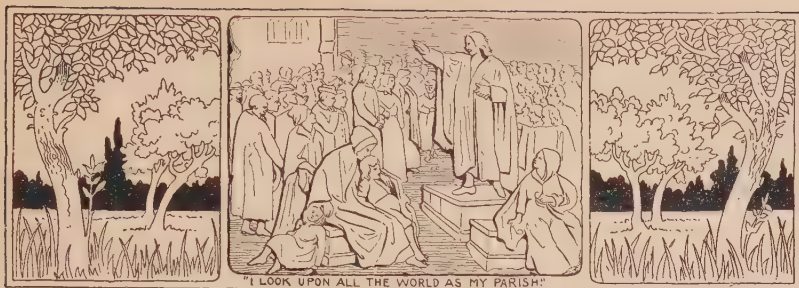
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CHAPTER LIV

Facing the Mobs

COURAGE OF THE WESLEYS.—RIOTS IN CORNWALL.—VANQUISHED MOB CAPTAINS.—“AVAST, LADS! AVAST!”—STRANGE REASONS FOR THE RIOTS.—THE VIOLENCE OF THE CLERGY.

IT was John Wesley's rule, confirmed, he says, by experience, “always to look a mob in the face.” An indescribable dignity in his bearing, a light in his eyes, and a spiritual influence pervading his whole personality often overawed and captured the very leaders of the riots.

Cornwall vied with Staffordshire for preeminence in brutal violence. The whole male population found training for this in the custom of “church ale,” which encouraged Bacchanalian feasts under the patronage of the clergy, and was productive, as one old writer admits, “of drunkenness, lasciviousness, vain disports of minstrelsy, dancing, and disorderly night watchings.” The sport of “hurling,” too, was carried on with a violence utterly reckless of limb or life. The “wreckers” on the coasts have supplied elements of tragedy for several nineteenth-century novels, and many a shipwrecked mariner suffered plunder and sometimes death at the hands of the rough smugglers and fishing folk before they came under the influence of the Great Revival.

When Charles Wesley commenced his service in the St.

Ives market house, in 1743, with the hundredth psalm, the drums were beaten and wild shouts were raised. When he offered to speak to the leaders they stopped their ears, and ran to pull him down, but he says: "They had no power to touch me. My soul was calm and fearless. . . . I walked leisurely through the thickest of them, who followed like ramping and roaring lions. . . . I rejoiced at my lodgings in our Almighty Jesus." Four days later he was preaching in the chapel, when the rioters entered and smashed windows and benches, leaving nothing whole but the stone walls. When they swore that Charles Wesley should never preach there again he immediately disproved it by telling them Christ died for them all. "Several times," he says, "they lifted up their hands and clubs to strike me, but a stronger arm restrained them." After ill treating some of the people, and trampling on an aged woman, the ruffians quarreled among themselves, broke the town clerk's (their captain's) head, and drove one another out of the room. When the mayor's son began beating the women Charles Wesley laid his hand upon him and said: "Sir, you appear like a gentleman. I desire you would show it by restraining these of the baser sort. Let them strike the men, or me, if they please, but not hurt poor, helpless women and children." He was turned into a friend at once and tried to quiet his associates. Thus it will be seen that Charles Wesley shared his brother's remarkable personal influence in the presence of rioters. It was to the credit of the mayor of St. Ives that he tried to protect the Methodists, and at last succeeded by securing twenty new constables for the purpose.

A few days later, at Wednock, the clergyman's mob swore horribly and assaulted the people with sticks and stones. Charles Wesley entreated them to strike him and spare the

people. Many lifted their hands and weapons, but he had, as he says, "an unseen Protector." The heart of one persecutor was touched, and he took the preacher by the hand, beseeching him to depart in peace, and offering to help him. The friendly mayor told him that the clergy were the principal authors of all this evil, continually representing the Wesleys as popish emissaries.

When John Wesley came to Cornwall a month later, accompanied, as we have seen, by John Nelson, he rejoiced to find a society at St. Ives of one hundred and twenty. On the way to church through the market place the crowd "welcomed us with a loud huzzah; wit as harmless," says Wesley, "as the ditty sung under my window, composed, as one assured me, by a gentleman of their own town:

" 'Charles Wesley is come to town
To try if he can pull the churches down.' "

John soon had occasion to apply his rule and "face the mob" again. "I went into the midst," he says, "and brought the head of the mob up with me to the desk. I received but one blow on the side of the head, after which we reasoned the case, till he grew milder and milder, and at length undertook to quiet his companions." A similar incident is recorded a few years later when a lieutenant at Plymouth-dock, with his retinue of soldiers and drummers, headed a raging crowd. "After waiting about a quarter of an hour," says Wesley, "perceiving the violence of the rabble still increasing, I walked down into the thickest of them and took the captain of the mob by the hand. He immediately said: 'Sir, I will see you safe home. Sir, no man shall touch you. Gentlemen, stand off! give back! I will knock down the first man that touches him.' We walked on in great peace, my conductor, a very tall man, stretching out his neck and looking

round to see if any behaved rudely, till we came to Mr. Hide's door. We then parted in much love. I stayed in the street,



DRAWN BY F. J. SHIELDS.

AFTER AN ENGRAVING BY W. MORTON

WESLEY PREACHING AT BOLTON CROSS.

after he was gone, talking with the people, who had now forgot their anger and went away in high good humor."

Sometimes the rioters themselves were the chief sufferers

from the missiles and clubs so freely used. Wesley gives a striking instance of this at Bolton, Lancashire, when he preached at the Cross, of which the artist, Frederic Shields, has given us a picture. One man was bawling just at Wesley's ear, "when a stone struck him on the cheek, and he was still." A second was forcing his way to assault Wesley, when another stone hit him on the forehead, "the blood ran down, and he came no farther." A third stretched out his hand, and in the instant a sharp stone came upon the joints of his fingers, and he was "very quiet" during the rest of the discourse, which was finished in peace. A year later, in the same town, Wesley was followed "full cry" to the house where he stayed. A raging crowd filled the street and took possession of every room in the house. One friend who ventured out was thrown down, rolled in the mire, and thrust back in such a state that "one could scarce tell who he was." Wesley called for a chair and quietly stood upon it. "The winds were hushed, and all was calm and still. My heart was filled with love, my eyes with tears, and my mouth with arguments." In a few hours the entire scene was changed, and none opened their mouths unless to bless or thank the Methodists!

When Wesley was preaching at Gwennap two men raging like maniacs rode furiously into the midst of the congregation and began to lay hold upon the people. Wesley commenced singing, and one man cried to his attendants, "Seize him, seize him, I say; seize the preacher for his majesty's service." Cursing the servants for their slowness, he leaped from his horse, caught Wesley by the cassock, crying, "I take you to serve his majesty." Wesley walked with him three quarters of a mile, when the courage of the bravo failed, and, finding he was dealing with a gentleman, he offered to

take him to his house, but Wesley declined the invitation. The man called for horses and took Wesley back to the preaching place.

The next day at Falmouth more serious perils awaited him. The rioters attacked the house where he was staying, and the noise was like "the taking of a city by storm." The outer door was forced; only a wainscot partition was between them and the object of their rage. Wesley calmly took down a large looking-glass which hung against the partition. The daughter, Kitty, cries out, "O sir, what must we do?"

"We must pray," he replied.

"But, sir, is it not better for you to hide yourself?"

"No," said Wesley. "It is best for me to stand just where I am."

The crews of some privateers, to hurry matters, set their shoulders to the inner door, and cried, "Avast, lads, avast!" and the door gave way. Wesley stepped forward at once and said: "Here I am. Which of you has anything to say to me? To which of you have I done any wrong? To you? Or you? Or you?" He walked on as he talked until he came to the middle of the street, when, raising his voice, he cried:

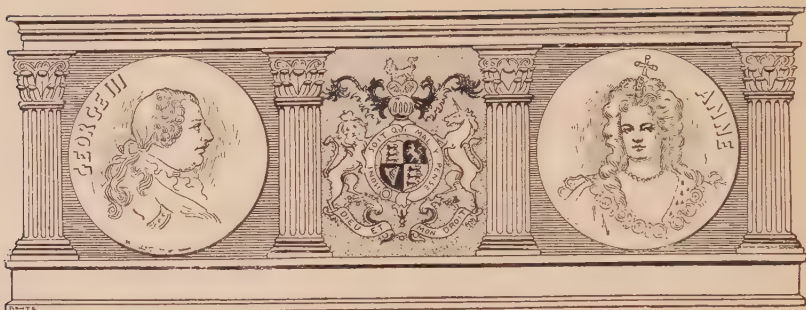
"Neighbors, countrymen! Do you desire to hear me speak?"

"Yes, yes," they answered; "he shall speak."

The captains of the mob, admiring his courage, commanded silence while he spoke, and afterward conducted him in safety to another house!

The reasons assigned by the rioters themselves for their opposition to Methodism were very various and curious, but they often echoed the pulpit cries of the day, or were the

outcome of passing popular and unreasoning excitement ready to seize on any excuse for violence. When Wesley visited St. Ives the second time, in 1744, he found the mob had pulled down the preachinghouse “for joy that Admiral Matthews had beat the Spaniards. Such is the Cornish method of thanksgiving. I suppose, if Admiral Lestock had fought too, they would have knocked all the Methodists on the head.” The violence of the clergy was not any more intelligent. The bigoted rector of Penzance had several Methodists committed to prison, among them Edward Greenfield, a tanner, who had a wife and seven children. Wesley asked what objection there was to this peaceable man, and the answer came: “The man is well enough in other things; but his impudence the gentlemen cannot bear. Why, sir, he says he knows his sins are forgiven!”



CHAPTER LV

The Methodists and the Magistrates

"MY BIRTHRIGHT AS AN ENGLISHMAN."—THE SUFFERING PEOPLE.—
THE MAYOR AND THE MAGISTRATES.—KING GEORGE AND HIS METH-
ODIST SUBJECTS.

CHARLES WESLEY faced the mobs as courageously as his brother. During the Sheffield riot of 1743, already referred to, "when," as he says, "hell from beneath was moved to oppose," an officer, Ensign Garden, contradicted and blasphemed. The stones flew thick and fast, but Charles sang on. Then, to save the people and the house, he gave notice that he intended to preach out of doors, "and look the enemy in the face." The enemy followed, and the officer, hearing him pray for sinners as servants of the devil, declared he had insulted the king, rushed at Wesley with his drawn sword and presented it to his breast. Wesley fixed his eye on the officer, threw open his coat, smiled in his face, and calmly said, "I fear God and honor the king." His countenance fell; he put up his sword and quietly left the place. He had said to his comrades, "You shall see, if I do but hold my sword to his breast, he will faint away."

When Charles Wesley left Sheffield an ambush by the roadside dashed out, flinging stones, eggs, and dirt. His horse was terrified and flew from side to side; then bolted through the crowd. But the poet preacher reined him in and returned to find brother David Taylor wounded and bleeding, and hatless. The rioters scattered before Wesley, and Taylor escaped, but the captain, rallying his forces again, hurled stones “that would have killed both man and beast had they not been turned aside by a hand unseen.” “Blessed be God,” says Charles, “I got no hurt, but only the eggs and dirt. My clothes, indeed, abhorred me.”

Fire engines and fireworks were the “devil’s artillery” against the dauntless preacher. At Hexham he preached in a cockpit, the only place at first available. “I imagined myself,” he says, “in the Pantheon, or some heathen temple, and almost scrupled preaching there at first, but we found ‘the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.’ His presence consecrated the place. Never have I seen a greater awe or sense of God than while we were repeating his own prayer. I set before their eyes Christ crucified, and crying from the cross, ‘Is it nothing to you?’ The rocks were melted into gracious tears. We knew not how to part.” But a few days later, in the same place, “Satan resented it, and sent as his champions” the servants of the justices, who set some cocks fighting. “I gave them the ground, and walked straight to the [town] cross, where was four times as many as the other place could hold. Our enemies followed. . . . Neither their fireworks nor their waterworks could stop the course of the Gospel. I lifted up my voice like a trumpet and many had ears to hear.”

During a terrific riot at Devizes, in 1747, the fire engine was brought to play through the broken windows of the house

where Charles Wesley was sheltered. The rooms were flooded. The horses were turned out of the stables at the inn, driven into a pond, and one of the Methodists was flung in after them. The mayor's wife, whose son had been converted recently, sent a message to Wesley begging him to disguise himself in women's clothes and escape. This he would not do. At last the rioters, maddened by drink supplied them by the curate and others, proceeded to untile the roof. A little girl called through the door: "Mr. Wesley! Mr. Wesley! Creep under the bed! They will kill you! They are pulling down the house." They heard a ruffian exclaim, "Here they are, behind the curtain!" But at this critical moment the Unseen Hand again intervened. There was a sudden calm. An hour later a constable came, who promised Charles Wesley to take him safely out of the town if he would promise not to return. "I will not give up my birth-right, as an Englishman, of visiting what part I please of his majesty's dominions," was the reply.

At last Charles Wesley and his comrades, Mr. Perronet and Mr. Meriton, were conducted out of the town by some of the gentlemen who had at first stirred up the mob. The rioters had been wrought up to such a pitch of fury that their masters dreaded the consequence, and now tried to appease them. On the way out of the town some one let loose two bulldogs. One fastened on Mr. Meriton's horse, but he felled it with the butt end of his whip. The other dog seized the horse's breast. The horse reared and Meriton slid gently off. The dog kept his hold till the flesh tore off. Some men called off the dogs, and others cried, "Let them alone." Charles Wesley stopped the frightened horse, Meriton remounted with great composure, and they rode on leisurely till out of sight of the

town. Then they sang hearty praises in the words of the hymn:

Worship and thanks and blessing,
And strength ascribe to Jesus!
Jesus alone defends his own,
When earth and hell oppress us.
Jesus with joy we witness
Almighty to deliver;
Our seal set to that God is true,
And reigns a King forever.

The main responsibility of these riots lay with the clergymen and "gentlemen" who stirred up the excitable people, and cannot be attributed to any illegal or rash actions of the Wesleys.

Miss Wedgwood, who is far from being a Methodist, says, concerning John Wesley: "Nothing that could form the flimsiest pretext for the treatment received by his followers can be brought home to him. He does not appear to have separated families; he never went where he had not a perfect right to be; he addressed those whom he regarded as beyond his pale in courteous and modern language; he never thrust his exhortations on anybody. The attacks of enemies, and even the accounts of alienated disciples, may be read without extracting a single anecdote that we should think discreditable to him; indeed, it is from this source that we derive much valuable, because unconscious, testimony to the good influence of his code on secular life. We cannot, then, admit that Wesley's errors of judgment or limitations of sympathy had even the slightest share in producing the popular fury of which instances have just been given." This was as true of Charles Wesley as of his brother.

The people shared with their preachers the outrage and brutality, besides the loss of property and employment. At

Wednesbury alone, in that fearful six-days' riot of 1743, the loss was computed at £500. The item of legal expense is a large one in Wesley's accounts. Methodist houses were torn down and everything they contained carried away; the rioters helping themselves to the things which pleased them best, no one offering the slightest resistance. Men and women fled for their lives, sometimes leaving their children behind, thinking no harm would come to them. It proved, however, that the townspeople were afraid to receive the little homeless ones lest their own houses should be torn down. Preachers and people were firm, and in time wore out their adversaries. The Methodists were not guilty of shedding other men's blood. Wesley was proud of the Cornish miners, saying, "I cannot find one of this people who fears those that can kill the body only." A paper lay for some time at a public house in Staffordshire declaring that the signers would "never sing, or read, or pray together again, or hear the Methodist parsons any more." The mob dragged the Methodists to this place to give their recantation as the price of immunity from further outrage. A few signed through fear, but the pledge was almost universally refused. "We have already lost all our goods," said the faithful disciples, "and nothing more can follow but the loss of our lives, which we will lose, too, rather than wrong our own consciences."

It is noteworthy that, while Wesley's persecutors passed quickly away, nearly all who took patiently the spoiling of their goods lived long and peaceful lives. Wesley notes the sad end of many persecutors. Egginton, the Vicar of Wednesbury, who delivered a sermon against the Methodists which Wesley pronounced the most wicked he ever heard, and who was responsible for the violence of the mob, died in a

few months. At Bristol, in 1743, a clergyman preached terrible sermons in several city churches against the upstart Methodists, and was about to do so in the Church of St. Nicholas, when, after announcing his text, he was seized with a rattling in the throat, fell backward in the pulpit, and expired the following Sunday. In some instances those who planned the death of the preachers were themselves wounded, and even killed, by their companions.



CHAPTER LVI

Loyal and Law-loving Subjects

KING GEORGE AND THE METHODISTS.—AT THE GLOUCESTER ASSIZES.—
WESLEY'S PATIENCE AND GENERALSHIP.—POPULAR VINDICATION
OF THE METHODISTS.

THE Methodists did indeed think it right to appeal sometimes to the laws for protection. And though magistrates, in part composed of or sympathizing with the bigoted and angered clergy, in very many instances refused to listen or do justice, in many other cases they did their duty, so that in some parts of the country there was peace. The mobs were mainly met with in Cornwall, Devonshire, Staffordshire, Lancashire, and Yorkshire. In London and Bristol quiet was soon secured, though at first there was disturbance. April 1, 1740, the rioters in Bristol became so violent that the mayor sent them an order to disperse. They set him at defiance. He then ordered several of his officers to take the ringleaders into custody. These received a severe reprimand at the quarter-sessions. When they began to defend themselves by saying many things against Wesley the mayor cut them short, saying: "What Mr. Wesley is, is nothing to you. I will keep the peace. I will have no rioting in this city." And there was none. It was much

the same in London, though deliverance came rather later. December 31, 1741, Sir John Ganson, the lord mayor, and chairman of the Middlesex bench, called upon Wesley, and said: "Sir, you have no need to suffer these riotous mobs to molest you as you have long done. I and all the other Middlesex magistrates have orders from above to do you justice whenever you apply to us." Sir John alluded to the king, George II. Wesley told Henry Moore, one of his biographers, late in life, that one of the Oxford Methodists, who had become a Quaker, settled at Kew. He was rich and much respected, and often had conversation with the king. One day the monarch asked him if he knew the Wesleys when he was at Oxford, adding, "They make a great noise in the nation." The Quaker replied, "I know them well, King George, and thou mayst be assured that thou hast not two better men in thy dominions, nor men that love thee better, than John and Charles Wesley." When the troubles of the Methodists were discussed by the council the king took a firm stand: "I tell you, while I sit on the throne no man shall be persecuted for conscience' sake."

On one occasion, in 1755, we find Wesley in the robe chamber, adjoining the House of Lords, when the king put on his robes, and our old print gives some idea of George II in all his glory. "His brow was much furrowed with age," writes Wesley, "and quite clouded with care."

In a few weeks after the interview of the lord mayor with Wesley he had occasion to test the promise of protection. On January 25, 1742, there was a tumult at Long Lane, and the hearers were in peril of their lives from the large stones thrown in. Wesley told the rioters: "You must not go on thus; I am ordered by the magistrate, who is, in this respect, to us the minister of God, to inform him of those who break

the laws of God and the king. And I must do it if you persist therein; otherwise I am a partaker of your sin." His words only serving to increase their fury, he proceeded to



FROM AN OLD PRINT.

GEORGE II IN HIS ROBES OF STATE.

"Tuesday, Dec. 23, 1755.—And is this all the world can give even to a king? all the grandeur it can afford? A blanket of ermine round his shoulders, so heavy and cumbersome he can scarce move under it! An huge heap of borrowed hair, with a few plates of gold and glittering stones upon his head! Alas, what a bauble is human greatness! And even this will not endure."—*Wesley's Journal*.

deeds. He said, "Let three or four calm men take hold of the foremost, and charge a constable with him, that the law may take its course." One man was brought in cursing and blaspheming in a dreadful manner. Five or six men took him to Justice Copeland, who bound him over to appear at the next sessions at Guildford.

When the rioter was brought into the house some of his companions shouted, "Richard Smith! Richard Smith!" the latter being one of their stoutest champions. Now, however, he made no response. He had been deeply convicted of sin, as had also a woman of bad character who was with him. The latter fell upon her knees and begged her

companion "never to forget the mercy which God had shown to his soul." The prosecution against the man arrested was dropped on his promising better behavior.

At the Gloucester assizes, March 3, where some of the

Methodists whose windows and arms had been broken lodged complaints, the judge informed the rioters "that, supposing the Methodists to be heterodox, it belonged to the ecclesiastical government to call them to account; and rioters were not to be reformers." A verdict was given for the plaintiffs after opportunity for fullest evidence against them in open court, among a neighborhood where all influential persons were on the side of their enemies. Hence the presumption in favor of their good behavior and discretion is very strong. At Stallbridge the rioters got the hearing of the case postponed for eighteen months on one pretext or another, but this only increased their bill of costs when they were found guilty. At Faversham, where Wesley was informed that the mob and the magistrates had agreed to drive Methodism out of town, he told the people after his sermon what he had been constrained to do with the magistrate at Rolvenden, who, perhaps, would have been richer by some hundred pounds had he not meddled with the society. "Since we have both God and law on our side," he concluded, "if we can have peace by fair means, we had much rather; we should be exceeding glad; but if not, we will have peace." At Colchester, Wesley says, the lewd fellows of the baser sort kept their distance because they knew the magistrates were determined to suffer no riot. He gratefully acknowledged the quiet enjoyed at Scarborough, "since God put it into the heart of an honest magistrate to still the madness of the people." When speaking of a Gloucester magistrate who had tamed the rioters he adds, "So may any magistrate if he will; so that, wherever a mob continues any time, all they do is to be imputed not so much to the rabble as to the justices;" and he might have added, to the parsons, who gave the brutes liquor and urged them to "stand up for the Church" and "drive out the Methodists."

“ We have done our work ; pay us our wages,” one of the mob was heard to say to the churchwarden ; and large mugs of beer were immediately brought in to refresh the laborers in this disgraceful harvest.

The Methodists were not driven out ; they more and more became masters of the situation, and after 1757 peace reigned almost everywhere. It was due largely to Wesley’s good generalship, his perfect command of his forces, and the noble example which he himself set. Isaac Taylor’s verdict is, “ When encountering the ruffianism of mobs and of magistrates, he showed a firmness as well as a guileless skill, which, if the martyr’s praise might admit of such an adjunct, was graced with the dignity and courtesy of the gentleman.” Wesley was always the gentleman and the scholar. As Rigg says : “ It was contrary alike to his temper and his tactics, to his courtesy and to his common sense, to say or do anything which might justly offend the taste of those with whom he had to do. . . . Wesley’s perfect, placid intrepidity, his loving calmness and serenity of spirit, amid whatever rage of violence and under whatever provocations and assaults, must always remain a wonder to the historian. His heroism was perfect ; his self-possession never failed him for a moment ; the serenity of his temper was never ruffled. Such bravery and self-command and goodness, in circumstances so terrible and threatening, were too much for his persecutors everywhere. He always triumphed in the end.”



CHAPTER LVII

Comrades of the Camp and Battlefield

THE FIRST METHODIST MARTYR.—JOHN HAIME, THE DRAGOON.—SCENES AT DETTINGEN AND FONTENOY.—UNARMED HEROES.—DAUNTLESS PREACHERS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

THE Methodist lay preachers suffered as severely as their leaders from the violence of the mob. William Seward, Whitefield's traveling companion on his second journey to America, deserves a place of honor as the first Methodist martyr. He was itinerating with Howell Harris when he was murdered at Hay, a little town by the brook which divides the Welsh Brecknockshire from the English Herefordshire. At Caerleon he had been stoned until he was quite blind, and at Hay, as he stood to preach on the green under the shadow of the old town wall, a ruffian standing behind him threw a heavy stone and felled him to the ground. When he regained consciousness he begged that no effort should be made to arrest or punish his assailant, prayed for the forgiveness of the murderer, "and when he had done this he fell asleep." His grave, of which we have a sketch, lies beneath a giant yew tree in Cusop churchyard, on a hill near the scene of his martyrdom. The stone bears this epitaph: "Here lyeth the body of William Seward, of Badsey, in the County of Worcester, gent., who departed ys life Octo-

ber ye 22nd, 1741; aged 38. ³ To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.'—Philippians chap. ye 1st, ver. ye 21.

“ ‘If earth be all
Why ore and ore a beaten path,
You walk and draw up Nothing New.
Not so our martyred seraph did
When from the verge of Wales he fled.’ ”

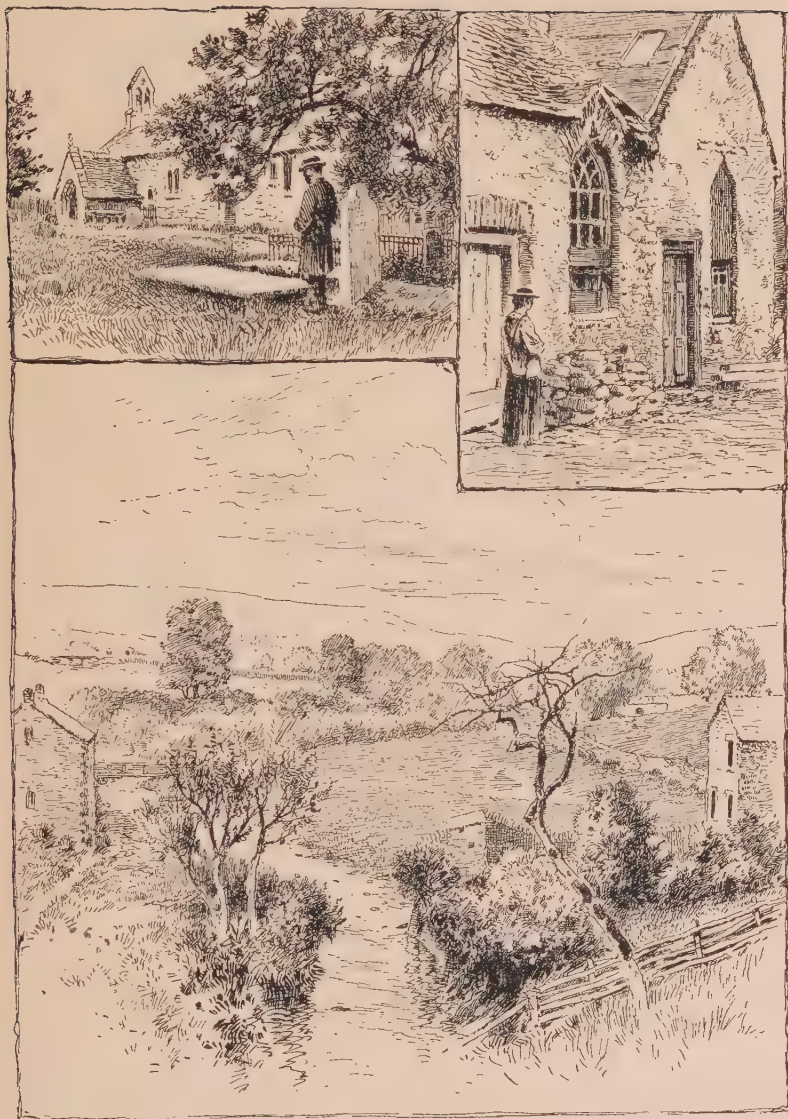
John Wesley found a chapel at Hay when he preached there in 1771.

Thomas Beard, whom Wesley found with John Nelson when he was a prisoner at Durham, was a quiet and peaceable man, but persecutors tore him from his trade, his wife, and his children, and sent him away as a soldier. Not possessing Nelson's physical strength, he sank under brutal cruelty, and Wesley says, “God signed his discharge and called him up to his eternal home.” Wesley wrote of him in his Journal:

Servant of God, well done! Well hast thou fought
The better fight; who single hast maintained,
Against revolted multitudes, the cause
Of God; in word, mightier than they in arms.

It was a favorite device of their enemies to charge the Methodists with vagrancy, and then, under the law of those feverish days, when the French and the Pretender were national bogies, to “press” them as soldiers. Attempts were even made to arrest the Wesleys in this way, as we have seen, and Thomas Maxfield, John Downes, Peter Jaco, as well as Nelson, were thus forcibly pressed, and Christopher Hopper, Thomas Olivers, the hymn writer, and Robert Roberts, all had narrow escapes from the same fate.

The condition of the English army in the days of George II was wretched in the extreme. Tramps, loafers, and jail birds



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

AFTER PHOTOGRAPHS.

THE GRAVE OF THE FIRST METHODIST MARTYR. THE OLD CHAPEL.
 AT HAY. THE SCENE OF THE MARTYRDOM.

were pressed into the ranks. General Wolfe, in one of his letters, says that if he stays much longer with his regiment, he will become "perfectly corrupt, for the officers are loose and profligate and the men are very devils." The general confirms the dark picture given by John Nelson. Of the garrison town of Portsmouth, Wolfe says, "Disorderly soldiers are collected here; . . . dirty, drunken, insolent scoundrels, improved by the hellish nature of the place, where every kind of corruption, immorality, and looseness is carried to excess."

Yet very early in the history of Methodism we find its confessors in the army. John Haime was one of these. His portrait, taken when he was seventy, puzzled Southey, who says: "What organs a craniologist might have detected under his brown wig it is impossible to say, but Lavater himself could never have discovered in those mean and common features the turbulent mind and passionate fancy which belonged to them. Small, inexpressive eyes, scanty eyebrows, and a short, broad, vulgar nose, in a face of ordinary proportions, seem to mark out a subject who would have been content to travel a jog-trot along the highroad of mortality, and have looked for no greater delight than that of smoking and boozing in the chimney corner." But Southey did not learn the secret of the Methodist soldier's spiritual romance, and describes him as passing his life in "a continual spiritual ague."

John Haime was a dragoon, enlisted in the year of Wesley's conversion. Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* gave him some hope of mercy, after wandering "by the river side and through woods and solitary places, with a heart ready to break." One day as he walked by the Tweed, "being all athirst for God," he says, "he lifted me up out of the dungeon, . . . the stream

glided swiftly along, and all nature seemed to rejoice with me." The imaginative and somewhat morbid soldier was soon preaching. He tells us he had three armies against him when he was sent with his regiment to Flanders: "the



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

FROM A PRINT.

JOHN HAIME.

French army, the wicked English army, and an army of devils." John Wesley wrote to him, "Speak the truth in love, even in the midst of a crooked generation." He did speak, and spoke well.

At the battle of Dettingen he was under fire for many hours. His left-hand comrade was shot dead, and Haime cried to God, "In thee have I trusted,

let me never be confounded." He was full of peace and joy in the midst of battle. As he lay wrapped in his blanket at night on the battlefield he had many a glorious vision. In his winter quarters in Flanders he found two soldiers who agreed to take a room with him for prayer and Bible reading. He organized a Methodist society of three hundred members, and soon there were six preachers. When they were in camp they secured a large tabernacle. He had often a thousand hearers, officers as well as privates. He frequently

walked twenty or thirty miles a day, preaching five times a day for a week together, and hiring others to do his soldier's work that he might be more free to speak.

It is not surprising that some officers opposed him. One asked him what he preached, and when Haime named some of the sins which he denounced the questioner winced, swore at him, and said that if it were in his power, he would have him flogged to death. "Sir," said the soldier, "you have a commission over men; but I have a commission from God to tell you you must either repent of your sins or perish everlastingly."

At Bruges the English general gave him permission to preach daily in the church, and on Sundays the Methodist soldiers marched there in procession. Already the hymns and tunes of the revival were in use, and the spirited singing of these sturdy men attracted many. John Evans was one preacher led to Christ by Haime. Mark Bond was another comrade religiously inclined, but fearing he had committed unforgivable blasphemy until God spoke the word of peace to him through Haime. Samson Staniforth, living a reckless life, says he was "knocked down like an ox" by kind words spoken to him by Bond, and could only cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Bond had only a piece of a Bible, which he gave his companion. Haime says that he and his friends were "speckled birds." A day of trial was to show if they were good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

On May Day, 1745, the terrible battle of Fontenoy was fought, and the eyes of all were on the Methodists. The day before Staniforth prayed for deliverance from all fear; his cry was heard, and he returned to the ranks full of joy in the Holy Ghost. That night he and Bond lay side by side

and talked of God. A vivid picture of the morrow's battle is given by John Haime:

"Indeed," wrote he, "this day God was pleased to prove our little flock, and to show them his mighty power. They showed such courage in the fight as amazed officers and sol-



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

FROM A PRINT.

THE TOWN HALL, BRUGES.

One of the preaching places of John Haime.

diers. When wounded some cried out, 'I am going to my Beloved!' Others, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' When William Clements had his arm broken by a musket ball they would have carried him out of the battle. But he said, 'No; I have an arm left to hold my sword; I will not

go yet.' When a second shot broke his other arm he said, 'I am as happy as I can be out of paradise.' John Evans, having both his legs taken off by a cannon ball, was laid across a cannon to die; where, as long as he could speak, he was praising God with joyful lips.

"For my own part, I stood the hottest fire of the enemy for about seven hours. But I told my comrades, 'The French have no ball made that will kill me this day.' After about seven hours a cannon ball killed my horse under me. An officer cried out aloud, 'Haime, where is your God now?' I answered, 'Sir, he is here with me, and he will bring me out of this battle!' Presently a cannon ball took off his head. My horse fell upon me, and some cried out, 'Haime is gone!' But I replied, 'He is not gone yet!' I soon disengaged myself, and walked on praising God." "I was exposed," he continued, "to the enemy and to our own horse; but that did not discourage me at all, for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. The hotter the battle grew the more strength was given me." He met one of the brethren seeking water, but did not know him, as he was covered with blood. "Brother Haime," he said, smiling, "I have got a sore wound."

"Have you got Christ in your heart?" inquired Haime.

"I have," he replied, "and I have had him all this day."

Haime marched on with a full heart. "I have seen many good and glorious days with much of the power of God. But I never saw more of it than this day. Glory be to God for all his mercies!"

Four Methodist preachers and many of the brethren fell on the field that day. Bond received two musket balls in a later battle, near Maestricht. He was killed, and Staniforth, who was by his side when he died, testified, "Here fell a great Christian, a good soldier, and a faithful friend." Haime

returned to England, and as a Methodist itinerant did twenty years' good service. Staniforth also entered the ranks of the preachers. In 1753 Wesley found seventeen of Haime's fellow-dragoons in the society at Manchester, where they were "patterns of seriousness, zeal, and all holy conversation." Wesley's tract, *A Word in Season; or, Advice to a Soldier*, 1743, shows that soldiers had a warm place in his heart.

Soldiers like Haime and Staniforth were quick to appreciate the heroism of their fellow lay preachers who were called to endure the attacks of English mobs without retaliating. "One evening," says Thomas Mitchell, "while William Darney was preaching, the curate of Guiseley came at the head of a large mob which threw eggs in his face, hurled him to the floor, dragged him into the street, and stamped on him." Jonathan Maskew was preaching afterward in the same place. They tore all his clothes off him and dragged him naked over the rough gravel and stones that then paved the streets. He managed to crawl to the house of one of his friends, where his wounds were bound up and clothes found for him. Thomas Mitchell was dragged seven times through a filthy pool and then painted with white paint from head to foot. Then he was taken by four men, holding his arms and legs outstretched, and after swinging him to and fro many times they finally tossed him into a pool ten feet deep. He says, "I felt my flesh shrink, but it was quickly over, and I gave myself up to the Lord." Pitying friends put him unconscious into a bed. The mob returned and dragged him out again, hustled him from the place with only an old coat wrapped around him, shouting over him, "God save the king, and the devil take the preacher." He was left in the road penniless, friendless, and scarcely able to stand.

“But,” he says, “from the beginning to the end my mind was in perfect peace, and I could heartily pray for my persecutors.”

When Wesley's first Conference met, in 1744, there were upward of forty of these heroic evangelists, who “through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.”



CHAPTER LVIII

Centers of Worship, Fellowship, and Philanthropy

THE PROBLEM OF THE UNEMPLOYED.—WESLEY'S ORGANIZED CHARITY.—
SILAS TOLD, THE PRISON CHAPLAIN.—THE NEWCASTLE ORPHAN
HOUSE.

WITHIN five years Wesley built "the room" at Bristol and the school at Kingswood, bought and almost rebuilt "that vast uncouth heap of ruins" called "the Foundry," opened his Orphan House at Newcastle, and secured the use of chapels in West and South-east London. These all became centers of philanthropy, and Wesley anticipated many of the organized schemes of social improvement which are characteristic of modern city missions and "institutional churches."

At the Foundry clothes were received from all who could spare them and were distributed among the poor. The society room was actually turned into a workshop for four months, where the poorest members were employed in carding and spinning cotton. Soon after, all the women who were out of work were employed in knitting, for which they were paid the ordinary price. A gratuity was added to the earnings in cases where the family need was great. Twelve persons were appointed to inspect the work and to visit the sick. In 1743,

in the great London society, Wesley appointed forty-six visitors whom he judged to be sympathetic, and capable for this delicate work. They were selected from a company of volunteers. Dividing the metropolis into twenty-three districts, they went two by two into the homes of the sick three times a week, relieving their wants and inquiring concerning their souls. Their accounts were presented weekly to the stewards. Four plain rules were laid down: 1. Be plain and open in dealing with souls. 2. Be mild, tender, and patient. 3. Be clean in all you do for the sick. 4. Be not nice. Here was the golden law: "If you cannot relieve, do not grieve the poor; give them soft words, if nothing else; abstain from either sour looks or harsh words. Let them be glad to come, even though they should go empty away. Put yourself in the place of every poor man, and deal with him as you would God should deal with you."

The comment of this princely and vigilant organizer is worthy of record. "We have ever since had great reason to praise God for his continued blessing on this undertaking. Many lives have been saved, many sicknesses healed, much pain and want prevented or removed. Many heavy hearts have been made glad, many mourners comforted; and the visitors have found, from him whom they serve, a present reward for all their labor." The two thousand members of the London society contributed in 1743, one of the early years, about £400, or a shilling a quarter from each. The Bristol society of seven hundred members, and the Newcastle of eight hundred, giving at the same rate, would contribute £300; and the societies elsewhere added probably £100, making the Methodist income for the year about £800—"the income by no means answering the expenses." Wesley exhibited rare wisdom in not handling any of the funds himself. Here is

his own testimony: "All that is contributed or collected in every place, is both received and expended by others; nor have I so much as the 'beholding thereof with my eyes.'" Of his personal charities we must speak later; they were only limited by his income. At Oxford, as we have seen, he lived on £28 and gave away the rest. He distributed £35,000 during his lifetime. In 1744 he received for the poor, in collections and contributions, £196, which was laid out in needful clothing and shoes for about three hundred and sixty needy people.

The Foundry schoolmaster, Silas Told, was a prison philanthropist, upon a smaller scale, but equally earnest, with John Howard, his contemporary. Dr. Stevens has justly described Told's story of his early adventures as "a record told with frank and affecting simplicity, in a style of terse and flowing English Defoe might have envied." After hairbreadth escapes from peril and shipwreck, and romantic experiences of the simple, free-handed hospitality of New England, we find him at last at the five o'clock service at the Foundry hearing Wesley preach from the text, "I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me." It sent him on a career of compassion attended by incidents which equaled, if they did not transcend, his wild adventures on the sea. His work among the prison population was similar to that of the saintly Elizabeth Fry. For thirty years he was the Methodist prison chaplain, and visited the workhouses for twelve miles round London.

One grim story gives us an insight into the social condition of London. It was Silas Told's first experience of a gallows scene at Tyburn. The body of one John Lancaster, after it was cut down, was seized by a surgeons' mob, who intended to carry it to Paddington, when a company of eight sailors appeared on the scene, with truncheons in their

hands, who said they had come to see the execution, and gazed with very menacing faces on the vacated gallows from whence the bodies had been cut down. "Gentlemen," said an old woman who was selling gin, "I suppose you want the man that the surgeons have got?" "Ay," said the sailors; "where is he?" The old woman gave them to understand that the body had been carried away to Paddington, and she pointed them to the direct road. Away the sailors hastened—it may be presumed that Lancaster was a sailor, and some old comrade of these men. They demanded his body from the surgeons' mob, and obtained it. What they intended to do with it scarcely appears; it is most likely that they had intended a rescue at the foot of the gallows, and arrived too late. However, hoisting it on their shoulders, away they marched with it off to Islington, and thence round to Shore-ditch; thence to a place called Coventry's Fields. By this time they were getting fairly wearied out with their burden, and by unanimous consent they agreed to lay it on the step of the first door they came to. This done, they started off. It created some stir in the street, which brought down to the step of the door an old woman who lived in the house, and who, as she saw the body, exclaimed in a loud, agitated voice, "Lord! this is my son—John Lancaster!" It is probable that the old woman was a Methodist, for to Silas Told and the Methodists she was indebted for a decent and respectable burial for her son, in a good, strong coffin and decent shroud. Silas and his wife went to see him while he was lying so, previous to his burial. There was no alteration of his visage, no marks of violence, and, says Told, "a pleasant smile appeared on his countenance, and he lay as in a sweet sleep." A singularly romantic story, for it seems the sailors did not know at all to whom he belonged!

Silas Told maintained himself as schoolmaster at the Foundry during his noble work in the prisons, receiving a salary of £36. He died in 1778, and Wesley wrote: "I buried what was mortal of honest Silas Told. For many years he attended the malefactors in Newgate without fee or reward, and I suppose no man for this hundred years has been so successful in that melancholy office. God had given him peculiar talents for it, and he had amazing success therein. The greatest part of those whom he attended died in peace, and many of them in the triumph of faith." Wesley himself took a deep interest in prison reforms, as his *Journal* and letters show, and was delighted to meet John Howard in his later years.

The foundation stone of the Orphan House at Newcastle-on-Tyne was laid in 1742. It became a preachinghouse, a children's home, a place of rest for workers, a school where Wesley taught rhetoric, moral philosophy, and logic to his young preachers, and a center of evangelism for the North of England. John Hampson describes it as a "clumsy, ponderous pile," and it has been replaced by a more stately building, but it became rich in hallowed associations. Dr. Stamp, in his *History of the Orphan House*, thus describes the original building: "The lower part of the 'house' was the chapel, fitted up with pulpit and forms; the men and women sitting apart. Galleries were subsequently erected. Above the chapel was the band room, opening from which were several class rooms for the use of the society. On the highest story were suites of apartments used as residences for the preachers and their families, while on the roof was a wooden erection, about eleven feet square, with tiled covering, generally known as 'Mr. Wesley's Study.' This latter room was of the homeliest description, and furnished with

Spartan simplicity, yet here Wesley loved to be, and here probably some of his happiest days were spent."

The building was to cost £700. Wesley commenced it with twenty-six shillings in hand! He says in his diary:



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

FROM WOODCUTS.

THE ORPHAN HOUSE, NEWCASTLE.

Wesley's attic study, old Newcastle Orphanage.

The Old Orphan House, 1742.

The New Orphan House and Wesleyan School.

"Many were positive it would never be finished at all; others, that I should not live to see it covered. I was of another mind; nothing doubting but, as it was begun for God's

sake, he would provide what was needful for the finishing it." And so it came to pass. In addition to £50 collected after "a rough charity sermon" at the Foundry, a pious Quaker, while the building was in progress, forwarded £100 with the following letter:

FRIEND WESLEY: I have had a dream concerning thee. I thought I saw thee surrounded by a large flock of sheep, which thou didst not know what to do with. The first thought after I awoke was that it was thy flock at Newcastle, and that thou hadst no house for them. I have enclosed a note for £100, which may help thee to build thee a new house.

Dr. Stamp says: "This munificent donation was most opportune; Mr. Wesley, in the exuberant kindness of his spirit, having just advanced to a member in distress the money he had brought with him to Newcastle to pay the workmen, trusting in Providence for a further supply." On the unexpected arrival of the £100 Mr. Wesley turned to one of his preachers, Thomas Dixon, who had remonstrated with him on what appeared his reckless generosity and reminded him of the awkward results that might ensue, and said, "O! Tommy, where was your faith?" Dreams appear to have had almost as much to do with the history of the Orphan House as with the history of Joseph, and others besides the good Quaker seem in "the visions of their head upon their bed" to have enjoyed a revelation of the good work to be done in the still-rising building. The Vicar of Newcastle, the Rev. Mr. Turner, riding by the site while the workmen were busy digging the foundation, and learning that a preaching-house for Mr. Wesley was then in course of erection, the good old man dropped the reins on his horse's neck and, lifting up his hands in thanksgiving, related how for three successive nights he had dreamed that on that very spot he saw the foot of a ladder on which men were climbing to heaven.

Regarding the dream as thus fulfilled, he gave utterance to an earnest wish and hope that the services there held might issue in the awakening and salvation of many.

Wesley opened the building on a cold day in March, while it was yet without windows or doors, and afterward held a watch night, the light of a full moon being probably the only illumination of the cold, unfinished structure. "Truly," says Tyerman, "the cradle in which Methodism was rocked by the hand of Providence was often rough."

It was here, in 1743, that Wesley first drew up the "Rules of the United Societies." Here he resolved to publish in three score or four score volumes all that is most valuable in the English tongue, "in order to provide a complete library to all who fear God." Here the beautiful and saintly Grace Murray held the post of matron from 1743 till her marriage with Mr. Bennet, one of Wesley's preachers, in 1749; and the pathetic story of Wesley's love for her, his bitter disappointment, and lifelong regret must be told elsewhere. It was here that one of the first North Country Sunday schools was formed, with nearly a thousand children. Here a Bible society existed before the British and Foreign Bible Society was formed, and poor boys who could not afford to buy were presented with Bibles. Here was one of the best choirs in England, and among the singers were the sons of Mr. Scott, afterward the celebrated Lords Eldon and Stowell. Here the itinerants rested and renewed their strength, and the colliers from the country round, after the evening service, would throw themselves on the benches and sleep till Wesley preached at five next morning. Here Dr. Rigg was born (his father having been the last minister to reside in the building), and he was the first child baptized in the "Brunswick Chapel," opened in 1821. From that year the Orphan

House was employed only for scholastic purposes, until, in 1856, it was pulled down, and replaced by the fine modern day school. "The famous study," writes Alderman Stephenson (a descendant of the merchant from whom Wesley obtained the site), "was, however, preserved, and is now set up, as far as possible, in its original form, in the grounds of a gentleman at North Shields."

Methodism was now firmly rooted in Bristol, Kingswood, London, and Newcastle in the year the rules were published, and besides this Wesley writes, "In this year many other societies were formed in Somersetshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire, and Nottinghamshire, as well as the southern parts of Yorkshire." Of the new London centers we must tell in our next chapter.



CHAPTER LIX

The Old Huguenot Chapel and its Social Mission

A WONDERFUL COMMUNION.—NICODEMUS'S ROOM.—THE CONVERTED ACTRESS.—METHODIST PLAYING CARDS.—THE EXECUTION OF EARL FERRERS.

ONE of the most interesting places in London to Methodist pilgrims is the dingy brick chapel of West Street, near Seven Dials. This was Wesley's first "chapel," so called, in London; for his places of worship at Bristol and Newcastle were called "preachinghouses" or "rooms," and the old Foundry was an extemporized preachinghouse. West Street Chapel became the center of West End Methodism and the mother of the Great Queen Street and Hinde Street societies. It links the Methodists with the Huguenots, for it was originally a French Protestant chapel, and was called "La Pyramide," or "La Tremblade." It was offered to Wesley in 1743, and he opened it as a Methodist place of worship on Trinity Sunday. The service commenced at ten o'clock; some hundreds partook of the Lord's Supper, and it was three o'clock before Wesley could leave. He preached at Whitechapel at five to an immense congregation. Next Sunday he was again at West Street, and the service was even more prolonged, lasting until four! For

the future, communicants were divided into three parts, that there might not be "above six hundred at once." And this was only five years after the first Methodist society had been formed!

This old chapel with its galleries seats about a thousand persons. In Wesley's day men and women sat apart, on



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

WEST STREET CHAPEL.

benches, for there were no pews. At the end where the Communion table stands are the marks where three windows once opened into a room in the adjoining chapel house. When these windows were open the whole service could be heard in the house. This parlor was known as "Nicodemus's Room," because many clergymen and others who feared to mix openly with the congregation sat there to listen, and there is a tradition that Wesley gave it this name. Wesley's movable pulpit stands in the vestry, and it now serves as a

clothespress for surplices. It was carried into the streets for services, and was used by Whitefield as well as the Wesleys. The sacramental cups came into Wesley's possession, and are to-day used at Great Queen Street Chapel. They, too, form a link with the Huguenot worship, and are a precious memento of the wonderful Communion services of the early Methodists. To one of these services there once came a timid girl. She tremblingly asked John Fletcher for "a note." "Come, my dear young friend," he said, "come and receive the memorials of your dying Lord. If sin is your burden, behold the Crucified: partake of his broken body and shed blood, and sink into the bottomless ocean of his love." And Mary Price, thus welcomed, found rest three months later under the preaching of the layman, Thomas Maxfield.

The historian of the chapel is the Rev. John Telford, who grows enthusiastic over its associations:

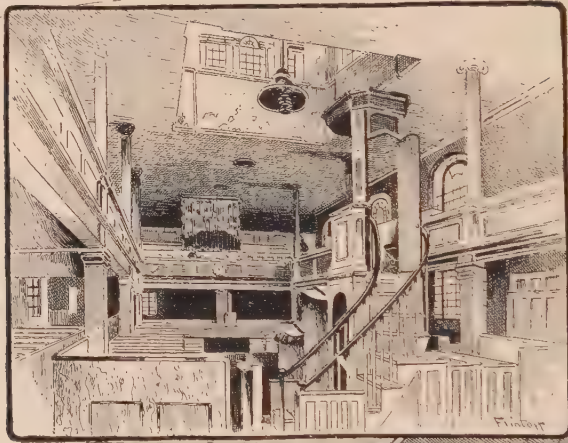
"Here John Wesley's coach once stood, and Charles Wesley's little horse ambled on with the absent-minded poet. John Fletcher hurried along to help Wesley in his heavy service, and George Whitefield came to charm the worshipers. The Countess of Huntingdon and her aristocratic friends drove up to these doors. But one loses sight of all distinctions of rank when the true spirit of that spot rises to meet the visitor who has turned over the biographies of early Methodist preachers and people. To this place came men and women seeking rest for their souls. Anxious, eager faces are around you. Their lives lie open in their own simple narratives, written for the glory of God and the guidance of pilgrims. The whole street is hallowed by the feet of penitent or of rejoicing worshipers."

Wesley was conducting a watch night here on one occasion when, as he says, "It came into my mind that this was the

very day and hour in which forty years ago I was taken out of the flames. I stopped and gave a short account of that



wonderful providence. The voice of praise and thanksgiving went up on high, and great was our rejoicing before the Lord." Here one Sunday the people saw him mounting the stairs with great difficulty. He had slipped on the ice as he crossed London Bridge. After his leg had been bound up



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

WESLEY'S PORTABLE PULPIT.

WEST STREET CHAPEL, INTERIOR.
OLD HUGUENOT COMMUNION CUPS.

The cups are still in use in Great Queen
Street Chapel.



by a surgeon he limped in great pain to West Street. He did no more walking that day, but was carried in a chair to the Foundry, and afterward found

himself in Threadneedle Street at the house of Mrs. Vazeille, to whom he was married about ten days later. 'Twenty years after this he preached at West Street on "those comfortable words, 'He knoweth whereof we are made; he remembereth that we are dust,' and many found consolation."

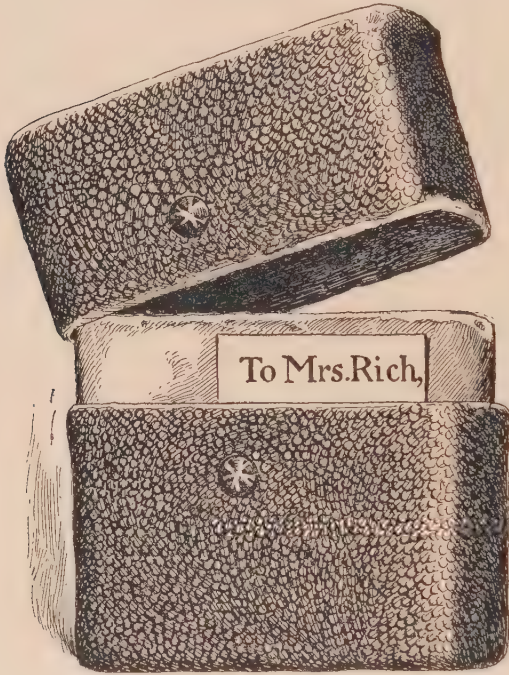
The services here were attended with marvelous spiritual power. When Charles Wesley preached on one occasion "the whole congregation were in tears or triumph, crying after God or rejoicing in his favor." He preached here during the earthquake panic of 1750, when he was writing his earthquake hymns. It was here that Samuel Bradburn preached on the Sunday after the poet's funeral, and here the "reconciliation services" were held, when Whitefield preached on the new birth and justification by faith and John Wesley read the prayers. Thus it became, in 1750, a sanctuary of charity and peace.

Here John Fletcher on the day of his ordination assisted Wesley at the Communion, and preaching his first sermon, could not always find English words to express his deep feeling, but offered prayers, tears, and sighs abundantly as he appealed to the people to "repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The saintly and scholarly Thomas Walsh, the apostle of Irish Methodism, and John Downes—"faithful John Downes" Charles Wesley called him—were both preachers, and the latter finished his course at West Street. Dr. Coke, the father of Methodist missions, received an enthusiastic welcome to the pulpit, where his "regular features, bright smile, sparkling dark eyes, alabaster brow, and raven hair" made him a striking figure.

The chapel was in the center of the theatrical world, and one of the earliest and most remarkable conversions in it was

that of Mrs. Rich, the wife of the proprietor of Covent Garden Theater. She was a beautiful and accomplished actress. Her husband hated her Methodism, and was angry when she forsook the stage, though he afterward ceased to persecute her. He died in 1761, leaving her in possession of wealth.



METHODIST PLAYING CARDS AND CASE.

At her house Charles Wesley was introduced into the choicest musical circle of the day, and met Lampe, Pepusch, Boyce, and Handel, to whom we must refer later. Mrs. Rich's daughters were taught music by Handel.

A curious memento of Mrs. Rich is the packet of Scripture playing cards now in the possession of Professor Richard Green, of Didsbury

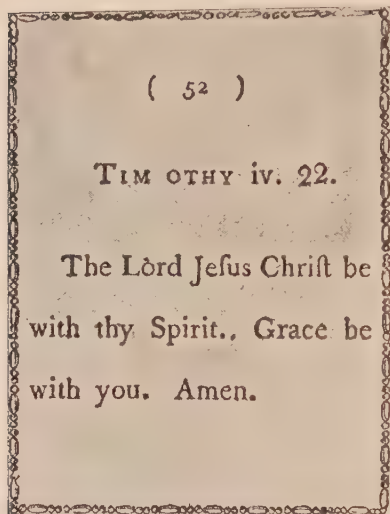
College. They were used to suggest and guide conversation in small parties of friends. The cards were shuffled, and the first to turn up would form a starting point for conversation. Persons holding cards relating to the first would speak of them. The singing of the verses would vary the proceedings and give additional interest to them. Dr. Osborne once stated that some of the old Methodists thus

“played cards” frequently, and so filled up a profitable hour and excluded gossip. Dr. Waller has given an extract from the MS. Journal of Hester Ann Rogers which throws light on this curious old Methodist custom:

“Thursday, Oct. 23, 1782—All the morning I enjoyed a calm heaven of love and communion unspeakable with the ever-blessed Trinity. In the afternoon I went to Mrs. Goose-try’s earlier, having a desire to speak to her closely when alone respecting her soul. Afterward I had some conversation with Peter, and the Lord blessed each of us. When dear Miss Salmon, Miss Hooley, and Mrs. Stonehewer came our subject was still Christian experience. After tea we drew cards so applicable to each that our hearts were filled with love and our eyes with tears. Miss Salmon’s card was, ‘Arise, and go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole.’ Mrs. Stonehewer’s, ‘What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you . . . and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your spirits, which are God’s.’ I was sweetly lost in communion with God, and a sense of his presence filling the room where we sat, as also that we were surrounded with ministering spirits—my cousin’s spirit seeming peculiarly near—I drew that card, ‘Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?’ I was so affected it almost overpowered me. Peter drew, ‘If two shall agree on earth touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.’ In prayer I felt a foretaste of glory. Mrs. Stonehewer was filled with a weight of love; Miss Salmon was enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and all received a peculiar blessing.”

Professor Green states that Charles Wesley promoted the

use of these cards, and in the Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society he has given a facsimile of one in the poet's handwriting. In these cards we have an ingenious antidote provided for the epidemic of card-playing of a very different character which raged in the circle in which Mrs. Rich and her friends moved in the last century.



A METHODIST PLAYING CARD.

About the time of Mrs. Rich's conversion Charles Wesley was preaching at West Street on a Sunday when "a company of players roared mightily for their master, but could not stop the course of the word;" and a year later a great disturbance was caused when some of them threw a cracker, which many took for a gun discharged. Fifteen years after this a remarkable series of

prayer meetings was held which greatly interested the aristocratic circles of the neighborhood. Earl Ferrers lay in the town awaiting trial by the House of Lords for the murder of his steward. West Street Chapel was "excessively crowded" when Charles Wesley and Fletcher preached and held services of intercession for the murderer. Charles Wesley and Whitefield attended the trial, at which nearly all the royal family were present. The earl was condemned to death, and, dressed in his splendid wedding suit, was drawn to Tyburn in his landau with six horses. His prayer, "O God, forgive my errors, pardon all my sins," gives room for

hope that the earnest intercessions at West Street were answered.

Of the work of Methodism in the portions of outcast London round about this old Huguenot chapel we must tell in our next chapter. When the lease of the chapel expired at the close of the century it was found necessary to transfer the society to a new and more promising center at Great Queen Street.



CHAPTER LX

A Pioneer Social Reformer

A CENTER OF PHILANTHROPY.—WESLEY'S MEDICAL MISSION.—ELECTRICITY.—DRASTIC TEMPERANCE TEACHING.—THE POOR MAN'S BANKER.

WEST STREET CHAPEL, like the Foundry, became a center of philanthropy. Here again we find Wesley anticipating methods of social work adopted by the modern London city missions. The chapel was near the homes of the wealthy, and these were often led by curiosity or real concern to come to hear the Wesleys and Fletcher. But very near also were the wretched purlieus of Seven Dials, strongly appealing to Methodist sympathy. Collections for Wesley's clothing scheme were made. A Friendly Union Benefit Society was formed. The front parlor of the house was used as a soup kitchen (the cooking apparatus was only removed in 1826). There was also a charity school similar to that of which Silas Told was master at the Foundry. Methodist women prepared linen for the children to wear, and formed what would be called to-day "a household salvage corps," collecting cast-off clothing and food for the poor. There are touching stories of outcast women rescued by the early Methodists.

But the boldest step was the founding of Wesley's medical dispensaries at the Foundry, West Street, and Bristol. The sufferings of the sick poor stirred his heart, and "I thought," says Wesley, "of a kind of desperate expedient: I will prepare and give them physic myself." For six or seven and twenty years he had made anatomy and physic the diversion of his leisure hours. When preparing for the mission to Georgia he studied medicine; now he applied himself again. "I took into my assistance an apothecary and an experienced surgeon; resolving not to go out of my depth, but to leave all difficult and complicated cases to such physicians as the patients should choose." In six months six hundred cases were treated in London. The Bristol dispensary soon had two hundred patients. In 1780 we find a medical man, Dr. Wilson, in attendance twice a week, for three hours each day, at the chapel house of West Street. Between 1746 and 1780 medical science and surgery in England had made more advance than in all the previous part of the century, but when Wesley commenced both were in a very poor condition. A twenty-third edition of his *Primitive Physic* was published in the year of his death, in which many of the early prescriptions were discarded, but some of the remedies appear very "primitive" and amusing in the present day.

One of the most significant relics of the ever "wide-awake" Wesley is his electrical machine, now preserved at the Wesleyan Mission House. He was keenly interested in Benjamin Franklin's experiments in electricity. The Royal Society at first refused to admit Franklin's papers on the subject into their printed transactions, but Cave, the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, was shrewd enough to see their value, and published them in a pamphlet, which was soon translated and attracted wide attention throughout Europe. The Royal

Society reconsidered the experiments, ceased to ridicule them, admitted Franklin a member of their learned body, and gave him the Copley medal in 1753. Wesley, as keen as Cave, the editor, saw the significance of Franklin's facts, and concluded a long account of the newly discovered force with the prophetic words, "What an amazing scene is here opened for after ages to improve upon!" And now, within a hundred and fifty years from Wesley's forecast, electrical science has revolutionized commerce, medicine, the newspaper press, and international intercourse!

When, in 1747, Wesley went with some friends to see the electrical experiments he was impressed with a new sense of the mysteries of divine thought and power in nature. "How must these confound those poor half thinkers who will believe nothing but what they can comprehend!" He turned the new discovery to practical account in 1756. Procuring an apparatus, and setting apart an hour a day for its use, he successfully treated various diseases, especially nervous affections. At Moorfields, Southwark, St. Paul's, and West Street thousands attended for his application of the new remedy.

Wesley's strong common sense and marvelous personal influence must have contributed largely to the success of his medical mission. Sanitary science was then unknown, but he vigorously taught that "cleanliness is next to godliness." He was able to give sound advice on diet and exercise. He clinched his advice by example.

In a century when dram drinking had become epidemic and drunkenness was fashionable his strong anti-alcoholic views, enforced in emphatic terms and backed by moral motives, account for many successful cases among his patients. As to the place of spirituous liquors in medicines, he was far in advance of his age when he said, "They may be of use in

some bodily disorders; although there would rarely be occasion for them were it not for the unskillfulness of the practitioner."

* He did not condemn the use of beer for sickly folk or those whom he calls "tender persons." He permits the use, by these, of "clear small beer;" but that this was the strong malt liquor of the brewers is doubtful, as in the same paragraph he expressly warns against the "malt liquors, which are exceedingly hurtful to tender persons."

He recognized the danger of the moderate use of strong drink. On one occasion, after dinner, Mr. Wesley's host mixed some brandy and water, as was his wont, on the ground that "his digestion was bad, and he was obliged to take a little." The "little" consisted of about a tablespoonful. "Truly," said Mr. Wesley, "that is not much, but one spoonful will soon lose its effect, then you will take two; from two you will get to a full glass, and then, in like manner, by the power of habit, you will want two glasses, and so on till, in the end, you will become a drunkard. O my brother, take care what you do." The brother did not take care; he ruined his character, and went down to a drunkard's grave.

He urged professed Christians to abstain from all spirituous liquors except when health or life is in peril. In the Rules of Society he says, "Avoiding evil in every kind; especially . . . buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity."

He denounced the liquor traffic in the strongest terms: "All who sell spirituous liquors in the common way, to any that will buy, are poisoners general. They murder his majesty's subjects by wholesale. They drive them to hell, like sheep. And what is their gain? Is it not the blood of these

men? Who, then, would envy their large estates and sumptuous palaces? A curse is in the midst of them. The curse of God cleaves to the stones, the timber, the furniture of them! The curse of God is in their gardens, their walks, their groves; a fire that burns to the nethermost hell. Blood, blood, is there; the foundation, the floor, the walls, the roof, are stained with blood! And canst thou hope, O thou man of blood—though thou art ‘clothed in scarlet and fine linen, and farest sumptuously every day’—canst thou hope to deliver down thy fields of blood to the third generation? Not so, for there is a God in heaven; therefore thy name shall be rooted out. Like as those whom thou hast destroyed, body and soul, ‘thy memorial shall perish with thee!’”

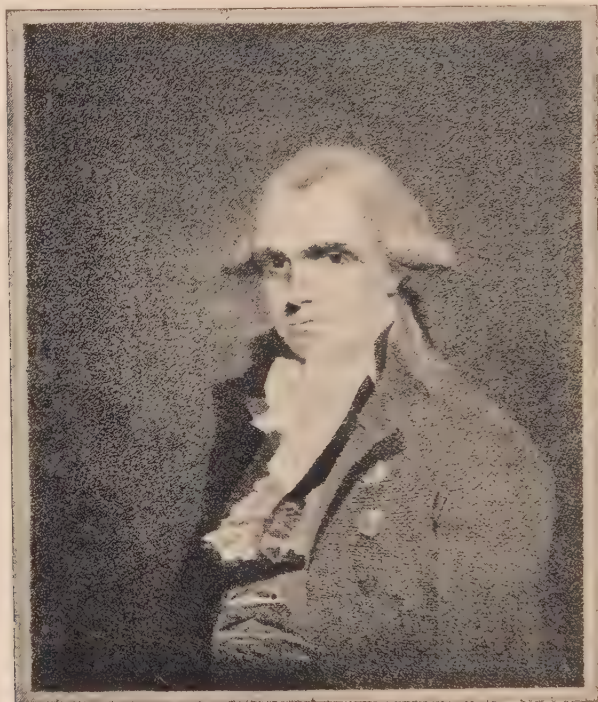
He advocated prohibition of the spirit traffic. In 1773, when bread was at famine price, and great poverty prevailed, one remedy he suggested was “prohibiting forever, by making a full end of distilling.” “What will become of the revenue?” shrieked economists. Wesley wrote: “True, the traffic brings in a large revenue to the king, but is this an equivalent for the lives of his subjects? Would his majesty sell one hundred thousand of his subjects yearly to Algiers for £400,000? Surely, no. Will he, then, sell them for that sum to be butchered by their own countrymen? O tell it not in Constantinople that the English raise the royal revenue by selling the flesh and blood of their countrymen!” In a similar strain he writes in the year 1784—seven years before his death—to the Hon. William Pitt. The duty that year paid on spirits was £20,000. “Is not,” writes Mr. Wesley “the blood of his majesty’s liege subjects bartered for £20,000? Not to say anything of the enormous wickedness which has been occasioned thereby, and not to suppose that these poor wretches have any souls! But, to consider money alone, is

the king a gainer, or an immense loser? Be it considered ‘dead men pay no taxes,’ so by the death of twenty thousand persons yearly (and this computation is far under the mark) the revenue loses far more than it gains. But I may urge another consideration to you. You are a man—you have not lost human feelings—you do not love to drink human blood—you are a son of Lord Chatham—nay, if I mistake not, you are a Christian. . . . It is amazing that the preparing or selling this poison should be permitted (I will not say in any Christian country) but in any civilized State.”

He recommended abstinence from wine and spirits on the ground of Christian expediency: “You see the wine when it sparkles in the cup, and are going to drink it. I tell you there is poison in it, and therefore beg you to throw it away! You answer, the wine is harmless in itself. I reply, perhaps it is so, but if it be mixed with what is not harmless, no one in his senses, if he knows it, will think of drinking it. If you add, it is not poison to me, though it may be to others; then, I say, throw it away for thy brother’s sake, lest thou embolden him to drink also. Why should thy strength occasion thy weak brother to perish, for whom Christ died? Now, let anyone judge which is the uncharitable person, he who pleads against the wine for his brother’s sake, or he who pleads against the life of his brother for the wine’s sake?” Again, in 1769, he writes: “In Ireland, above all countries in the world, I would sacredly abstain from dram drinking. Why? Because the evil is so general.” Thus it will be seen that Wesley was an advanced temperance reformer.

He also established “A Poor Man’s Bank.” His own account of it is very suggestive, and shows how his social schemes appealed to non-Methodists: “Sunday, January 17, 1748.—I made a public collection toward a lending-stock for

the poor. Our rule is to lend only twenty shillings at once, which is repaid weekly within three months. I began this about a year and a half ago: £30 16s. were then collected; and out of this no less than two hundred and fifty-five persons



PAINTED BY KEENAN.

FROM THE ENGRAVING BY SCOTT.

J. LACKINGTON.

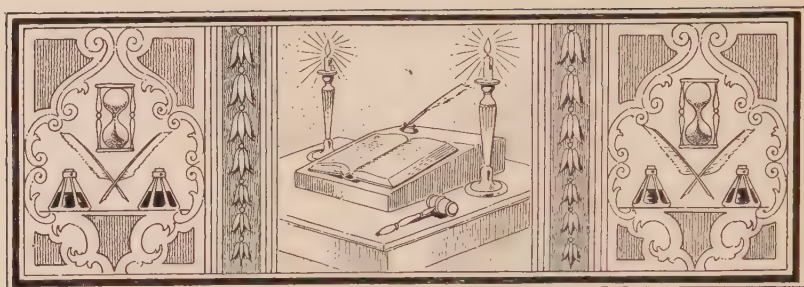
The title of the original print is followed by the legend "who a few years since began Business with a few pounds, now sells One Hundred Thousand Volumes Annually." Above the portrait was engraved the motto, "SUTOR ULTRA CREPIDAM FELICITER AUSUS."

have been relieved in eighteen months. Dr. W., hearing of this design, sent a guinea toward it; as did an eminent deist the next morning."

One man, famous in his day, who was helped by Wesley's lending-stock was Mr. Lackington, the bookseller, who se-

cured his first shop through the kindness of the Methodists and received a loan of £5, in 1774, to increase his little stock of books. A year after Wesley's death his profits for the twelve months were £5,000. In the days of his prosperity he forsook his old friends and wrote scurrilous things about them in his letters. In his later days he retracted the scandalous passages and tried to make amends by chapel building. He tells how Wesley gave £10 or £20 at once to tradesmen in need and distributed a handful of half crowns at a time to the aged poor, for whom he also provided shelter.

Thus in many ways Wesley showed himself the "genuine social progenitor" of the Darkest England schemes of to-day.



CHAPTER LXI

Wesley's First Conference

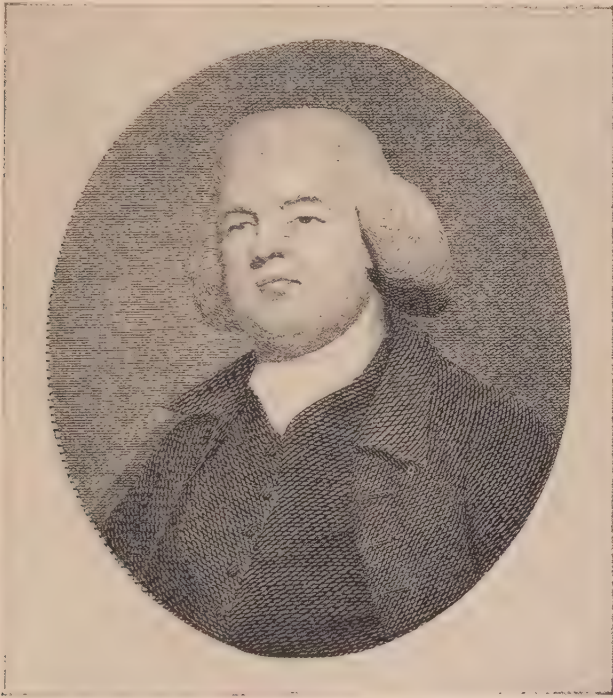
NO "ROPE OF SAND."—A CHURCH WITHOUT THE NAME.—RECOVERY OF THE OLD MINUTES.—WISE AND WITTY RULES.—WERE THE METHODISTS SCHISMATICS?

WE have seen that Methodism was a revival of primitive Christianity; based on apostolic doctrine, inspired by conscious divine life, expressed and sustained by spiritual fellowship, and vindicated by moral miracles and Christlike philanthropy. No merely self-centered life was theirs who sang:

Not in the tombs we pine to dwell,
Not in the dark monastic cell
By vows and grates confined;
Freely to all ourselves we give,
Constrained by Jesus' love to live
The servants of mankind.

How were this new life, fellowship, and philanthropy to be sustained and extended? This was the question confronting Wesley. This new "communion of saints" was composed only in part of those who had been nominal members of the moribund Established Church. A far greater number had belonged to no Church. They had been converted from an utterly godless and immoral life. It became increasingly evident that the Church of England, so called, would provide

neither shepherds, fold, nor food for these sheep gathered from the wilderness. The existing Nonconformist churches could not meet their special need of spiritual instruction and intercourse. The good Whitefield felt this when in his later years he said to one of Wesley's itinerants, John Poole: "John,



FROM THE CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE.

JOHN POOLE.

thou art in thy right place. My brother Wesley acted wisely. The souls that were awakened under his ministry he joined in societies and thus preserved the fruit of his labor. This I neglected, and my people are a rope of sand." It was Wesley's aim to bind together with links of steel not only individual members, but all the new societies from Land's End to

Newcastle. And he did this at first without any intention to form a separate Church from the Establishment. With a sole desire to shepherd these souls, but against his own ecclesiastical sentiments, in spite of his own protests, and with a curious obliviousness to the final results of his action, Wesley step by step organized a great New Testament Church, which after his death was to drift away from the State Establishment and become one of the Free Churches of the World. It was not Wesley but Wesley's Christ who, as Head of his Church, overruled Wesley's Anglicanism that Methodism might become cosmopolitan.

During his first five years of itinerancy, from 1739 to 1744, forty-five preachers, including three or four clergymen, had gathered round Wesley. The lay preachers maintained themselves by working at their secular callings in the intervals of their journeys. There is no record of the total membership in England, but in London alone there were two thousand members. The class meeting was fully developed, the Rules of the United Societies printed and enforced, the quarterly visitation of the classes arranged for, lay preaching instituted, places of worship secured, and the sacraments administered. And all this had been done apart from episcopal authority or control. We now approach a new epoch in the history of these united societies. We find them becoming a Church, without the name; an organized communion of Christians, having their own pastors, sacraments, fellowship, and Church government.

Five years after the formation of the first society class the first Conference was held in London, in 1744. Its purely incidental character is indicated by the quiet record in Wesley's Journal, where "Conference" is spelled with a small "c". "Monday, August 25, and the five following days,

we spent in conference with many of our brethren, come from several parts, who desire nothing but to save their own souls and those that hear them."

Wesley's first printed Minutes of the proceedings of the early Conferences were published in Dublin, in 1749, in two small pamphlets, one summarizing Doctrine and the other Discipline. But these pamphlets were only abridged records. The Wesley Historical Society of England has recently issued a collation of two manuscripts, one of which has only just come to light. The first of these is in Headingley College library. It was Wesley's own copy of the early Minutes, in four handwritings, with occasional corrections in Wesley's own hand. Its worn boards show that it spent some time in Wesley's pocket or saddlebags. The other copy of the Minutes is in the handwriting of John Bennet, the husband of Grace Murray. It has been in the possession of his descendants until recently, and is more full than Wesley's copy. It has been reproduced *verbatim*, and the passage here given shows some interesting variations from the later printed summaries:

"That little conclave of 1744 in the disused Foundry," says Dr. Gregory, "was the first of a series which has already extended over a hundred and fifty-five years, with many offshoots and affiliations, directing and administering to thousands of churches, in almost every nation under heaven." There were present the two Wesleys and four other clergymen: John Hodges, rector of Wenvo, Wales; Henry Piers, Vicar of Bexley; Samuel Taylor, Vicar of Quinton in Gloucestershire; and John Meriton, from the Isle of Man. The four lay "assistants" present were Thomas Richards, Thomas Maxfield, John Bennet, and John Downes. Of the latter four, John Downes was the only one who remained

true to the Wesleys throughout his life, and in his *Journal* Wesley pays a warm tribute to his genius and devotion.

- A. 1. Be diligent, never be unemployed a moment, never be triflingly employed, [never while away time,] spend no more time at any place than is strictly necessary.
2. Be serious. Let your motto be, Holiness unto the Lord. Avoid all lightness as you would avoid hell-fire, and laughing as you would cursing and swearing.
3. Touch no woman; be as loving as you will, but hold your hands off 'em. Custom is nothing to us.
4. Believe evil of no one. If you see it done, well; else take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on every thing. You know the judge is always allowed [supposed]† to be on the prisoner's side.
5. Speak evil of no one; else your word especially would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your [own] breast, till you come to the person concerned.
6. Tell everyone what you think wrong in him, and that plainly, and as soon as may be, else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste, therefore, to cast the fire out of your bosom.
7. Do nothing as a gentleman: you have no more to do with this character than with that of a dancing-master. You are the servant of all, therefore
8. Be ashamed of nothing but sin: not of fetching wood, or drawing water, if time permit; not of cleaning your own shoes or your neighbour's.
9. Take no money of any one. If they give you food when you are hungry, or clothes when you need them, it is good. But not silver or gold. Let there be no pretence to say, we grow rich by the Gospel.
10. Contract no debt without my knowledge.
11. Be punctual: do everything exactly at the time; and in general do not mend our rules, but keep them, not for wrath but for conscience sake.
12. Act in all things not according to your own will, but as a son in the Gospel. As such, it is your part to employ your time in the manner which we direct: partly in visiting the flock from house to house (the sick in particular); partly, in such a course of Reading, Meditation and Prayer, as we advise from time to time. Above all, if you labour with us in our Lord's vineyard, it is needful you should do that part of the work [which] we prescribe [direct]* at those times and places which we judge most for His glory.

THE RULES OF AN ASSISTANT.

Reproduced from the notes of the first Conference, as recently printed by the Wesleyan Historical Society.

It is this faithful John Downes who engraved the remarkable portrait of Wesley as he appeared at the time of this first

Conference. It follows the painting by Williams, and appeared as the frontispiece of Wesley's *Notes on the New Testament*. Downes was the mechanical genius of early Methodism, and a clever mathematician. Wesley wrote of him in 1774:

"I suppose he was by nature full as great a genius as Sir Isaac Newton. I will mention but two or three instances of it: When he was at school, learning algebra, he came one day to his master, and said, 'Sir, I can prove this proposition a better way than it is proved in the book.' His master thought it could not be; but upon trial, acknowledged it to be so. Some time after, his father sent him to Newcastle with a clock, which was to be mended. He observed the clock-maker's tools, and the manner how he took it in pieces and put it together again; and when he came home, first made himself tools, and then made a clock, which went as true as any in the town. I suppose such strength of genius as this has scarce been known in Europe before.

"Another proof of it was this: Thirty years ago, while I was shaving, he was whittling the top of a stick; I asked, 'What are you doing?' He answered, 'I am taking your face, which I intend to engrave on a copper plate.' Accordingly, without any instruction, he first made himself tools, and then engraved the plate. The second picture which he engraved was that which was prefixed to the *Notes upon the New Testament*. Such another instance, I suppose, not all England, or perhaps Europe, can produce."

The preliminary rules of debate recorded in John Bennet's MS. reflect the character of Wesley as faithfully as John Downes's portrait did his features:

"It is desired that all things may be considered as in the immediate presence of God; that we may meet with a single

eye, and as little children who have everything to learn; that every point may be examined from the foundation; that every person may speak freely whatever is in his heart; and that every question proposed may be fully debated, and bolted to the bran.

“ The first preliminary question was then proposed; namely, How far does each of us agree to submit to the unanimous judgment of the rest? It was answered, In speculative things each can only submit so far as his judgment shall be convinced; in every practical point so far as we can without wounding our consciences. To the second preliminary question, namely, How far should any of us mention to others what may be mentioned here? it was replied, Not one word which may be here spoken of persons should be mentioned elsewhere. Nothing at all, unless so far as we may be convinced the glory of God requires it. And from time to time we will consider, on each head, Is it for the glory of God that what we have now spoken should be mentioned again? ”

In this spirit the Conference considered three points: 1. What to teach. 2. How to teach. 3. How to regulate doctrine, discipline, and practice. For two days they conversed on such vital doctrines as the Fall, the Work of Christ, Justification, Regeneration, Sanctification. The answer to the question “ How to teach? ” was fourfold: 1. To invite. 2. To convince. 3. To offer Christ. 4. To build up. And to do this in some measure in every sermon.

In the light of later history the questions relating to the Church of England are of great interest. It was agreed to obey the bishops “ in all things indifferent, ” and to observe the canons “ so far as we can with a safe conscience. ” The charge of schism was anticipated thus:

“ Q. 12. Do not you entail a schism on the Church? that

is, Is it not probable that your hearers after your death will be scattered into all sects and parties? Or that they will form themselves into a distinct sect?

“A. 1. We are persuaded the body of our hearers will even after our death remain in the Church, unless they be thrust out. 2. We believe, notwithstanding, either that they will be thrust out or that they will leaven the whole Church. 3. We do, and will do, all we can to prevent those consequences which are supposed likely to happen after our death, 4. But we cannot with good conscience neglect the present opportunity of saving souls, while we live, for fear of consequences which may possibly or probably happen after we are dead.”

It was decided that lay assistants should be employed “only in cases of necessity.” The rules of an assistant are terse: “Be diligent. Never be triflingly employed. Be serious. . . . Speak evil of no one; else your word, especially, would eat as doth a canker.” The remainder of these rules appear in our facsimile pages of the recent edition of Bennett’s Notes.

It was decided that the best way to spread the Gospel was “to go a little and little farther from London, Bristol, St. Ives, Newcastle, or any other society. So a little leaven would spread with more effect and less noise, and help would always be at hand.” It is evident that the towns here named were regarded as the centers of Methodism in that year. The belief was expressed that the design of God in raising up the preachers called Methodists was “to reform the nation, particularly the Church, and to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land.”

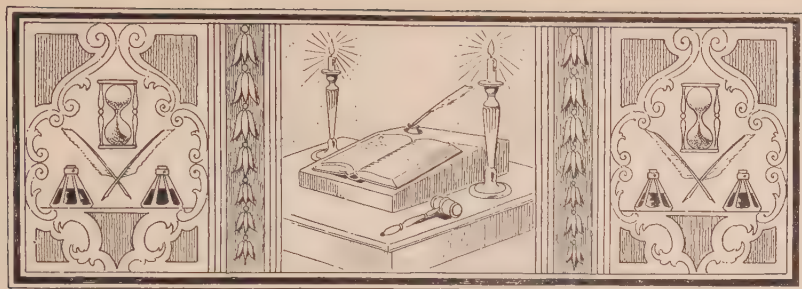
During its session Lady Huntingdon invited the Conference to her London mansion in Downing Street, and Wesley

preached from the text, "What hath God wrought." This was the first of the household services which afterward, under Whitefield, almost transformed that aristocratic mansion into a chapel.



JOHN WESLEY'S SHOES.

Mr. Wesley left these shoes in the care of one of his preachers on his last visit to Norwich. They are now in the collection of Mr. Stampe, of Grimsby.



CHAPTER LXII

“The First of Theological Statesmen,” and His Churchmanship, 1745-1770

VERDICTS ON WESLEY AS AN ORGANIZER.—THE CONFERENCE TOWNS.—
A MIXED MEMBERSHIP.—A LAYMAN AND A LADY.—A MERE POLIT-
ICAL INSTITUTION.—BURNING CHURCH QUESTIONS.

MACAULAY was not alone in regarding Wesley as “the first of theological statesmen.” Lecky judges that the splendid victories by land and sea that formed the most dazzling episodes in the reign of George II must yield in real importance to the religious revolution which had begun in England. Professor Rogers, in his Congregational Lecture, describes Wesley as “one of the most remarkable statesmen ever found in the Christian ministry.” Dr. Stoughton regards the growth of Methodism as “the most important ecclesiastical fact of modern times.” Leslie Stephen affirms that “Wesleyanism is in many respects by far the most important phenomenon of the century,” and Augustine Birrell declares: “You cannot cut him out of our national life. No single figure influenced so many minds, no single voice touched so many hearts. No other man did such a life’s work for England. As a writer he has not achieved distinction, he was no Athanasius, no Augustine, he was ever a preacher and an organizer, a laborer in the service of humanity.”

A rapid survey of Wesley's Conferences will illustrate his marvelous skill as an organizer, but it ought to be remembered that it was not merely Wesley's ecclesiastical statesmanship that wrought the revolution in the religious life of the country and built up Methodism, but what Rogers calls "that spiritual enthusiasm which inspired Wesley and Whitefield." Dr. Rigg considers that greater justice has been done to Wesley as an organizer than perhaps in any other respect. "Probably there has been some exaggeration in the view given of this aspect of his character. . . . In his work of organization Wesley kept in view the same objects which governed his whole life, and under the inspiration of which he became the preacher and apostle that he was." His conversion made him an evangelist. To raise up a body of converted men who should become witnesses of the same truth by which he himself had been saved was his life-work. "This was the inspiration under which he became a mighty preacher, a flaming evangelist, a burning and shining light. This also made him an organizer of his living witnesses." While we recognize what Macaulay calls his "genius for government," we must not lose the apostle in the statesman.

The second Conference was held at Bristol, in the Horse-fair preaching room. London and Bristol were the meeting places until 1753, when Leeds was added; in 1765 Manchester was visited, and these became the four Conference towns for the rest of Wesley's lifetime.

A layman was present at the second Conference, as well as seven lay preachers. This layman was Marmaduke Gwynne, a magistrate of Garth, whose daughter Charles Wesley married. In 1746 the question was asked, "Who are the properest persons to be present at any Conference of this nature?" The answer was: "1. As many of the preachers as conven-



DRAWN BY JOHN P. DAVIS.

FROM WOODCUTS.

THE CONFERENCE CITIES.

Manchester in 1728.

Leeds in the early part of the eighteenth century.

Bristol from Brandon Hill.

iently can. 2. The most earnest and most sensible of the Band Leaders where the Conference is. 3. Any pious and judicious stranger who may be occasionally in the place."

The next year Vincent Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham, was present, with other clergymen, and Howell Harris, the Methodist Apostle of Wales, was with them; for his alliance with Whitefield had not lessened his love for Wesley. The next year came a doctor of medicine, John Jones, who was afterward ordained by the Greek bishop Erasmus, and of whom we must hear again. The brave soldier, John Haime, appears in 1753, and the famous Grimshaw, Vicar of Haworth, with John Nelson, Thomas Walsh, and many others. As an instance of the growing friendship of the Arminian and Calvinistic Methodists, in 1762, at Leeds, Whitefield, Romaine, Madan, and Venn were present, and Methodist womanhood was represented by the Countess of Huntingdon. It is therefore evident that the early Conferences were very mixed in their membership. It was not until 1784, when Wesley's famous "Deed of Declaration" was enrolled, that the Conference received a legal definition, and the governing body of one hundred preachers was appointed. And it was not until 1797 that "the Band Leaders" and "pious and judicious strangers" were formally excluded, and preachers only declared eligible to attend. Later legislation has again opened the door to the laity.

The Church principles aimed at and acted on at Wesley's Conferences are clearly stated. The leading principle is that every ecclesiastical obligation, including obedience to bishops and observance of canons, must be subordinated to the salvation of souls. We have seen this expressed at the first Conferences; it was reaffirmed later. In 1746, after he had read Lord (Chancellor) King's Account of the Primitive

Church, Wesley finally renounced the doctrine of apostolical succession. He never swerved from his conclusion, and in a letter to his brother Charles many years after he spoke of "the uninterrupted succession" as "a fable, which no man ever did or can prove." The Minutes of 1747, on the point of Church principles, are of great importance, and, as Canon Overton has said, "in their quaint form of question and answer are deeply interesting." We give them from John Bennet's recently discovered copy:

Q. 7. What instance or ground is there in the New Testament for a national church?

A. We know none at all. We apprehend it to be a mere political institution.

Q. 8. Are the three orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons plainly described in the New Testament?

A. We think they are, and believe they generally obtained in the churches of the Apostolic age.

Q. 9. But are you assured God designed the same plan should obtain in all churches throughout all ages?

A. We are not assured of this, because we do not know that it is asserted in Holy Writ.

Q. 10. If this plan were essential to a Christian Church what must become of all the foreign Reformed Churches?

A. It would follow they are no parts of the Church of Christ—a consequence full of shocking absurdity.

Q. 11. In what age was the divine right of episcopacy first asserted in England?

A. About the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Till then all the Bishops and Clergy in England continually allowed and joined in the ministrations of those who were not episcopally ordained.

Q. 12. Must there not be numberless accidental varieties [variations] in the government of various churches?

A. There must be in the nature of things. As God variously dispenses his gifts of nature, providence, and grace, both the offices themselves and the officers in each ought to be varied from time to time.

Q. 13. Why is it that there is no determinate plan of church government appointed in Scripture?

A. Without doubt, because the wisdom of God had a regard to this necessary variety.

Q. 14. Was there any thought of uniformity in the government of all churches until the time of Constantine?

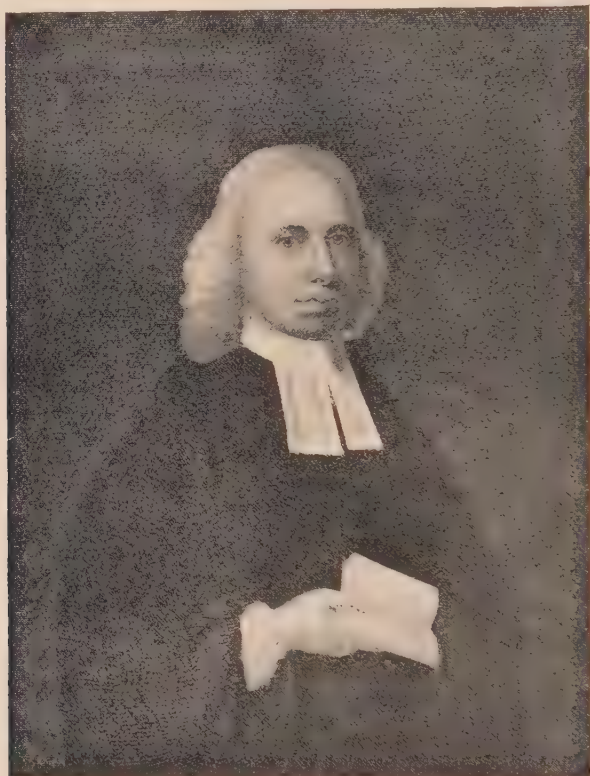
A. It is certain there was not; and would not have been then, had men consulted the word of God only.

The forbearance of many of the preachers and their flock had been strained to the utmost by the action of the Anglican clergy, and some of the ablest of the lay preachers were disposed to favor the request of the people for the sacraments from their own pastors. In Bristol, Leeds, and parts of Derbyshire they had been refused the Lord's Supper. As the Leeds Conference of 1755 approached, the brothers Edward and Charles Perronet, sons of the Vicar of Shoreham, Thomas Walsh, and Joseph Cownley actually began to administer the sacraments without the sanction of Wesley or the Conference.

It was a crisis in the history of Methodism. Sixty-three preachers assembled—the largest number that had yet met. There were three views of the question: Was it expedient to separate from the Church of England? 1. Walsh and his friends claimed for themselves the right to administer the sacraments to their persecuted people, whether it meant separation or not. 2. Charles Wesley, who clung hard to High Church principles on this point, held an opposite view, and joined with Walter Sellon, who had been a Methodist itinerant, but was now a curate in Leicestershire, in a strong appeal to his brother. 3. John Wesley succeeded in persuading the Conference that, whether it was lawful or not, it was no way expedient to separate from the Church. He admitted that he could not answer the arguments for secession, but he wrote: “I only fear the preachers or people leaving not the Church, but the love of God and inward or outward holiness. . . . If, as my lady [Huntingdon] says, all outward Establishments are Babel, so is this Establishment. Let it stand, for me; I neither set it up nor pull it down. But let you and I build up the city of God.” “Church or no Church,” he again wrote, “we must attend to the work of saving

souls." He felt that separation at this time would not help the main work. Walsh and his associates consented, for the sake of peace, to cease to administer the sacraments.

Charles Wesley had gained his point, but he felt that it



FROM THE ENGRAVING BY BRAIN.

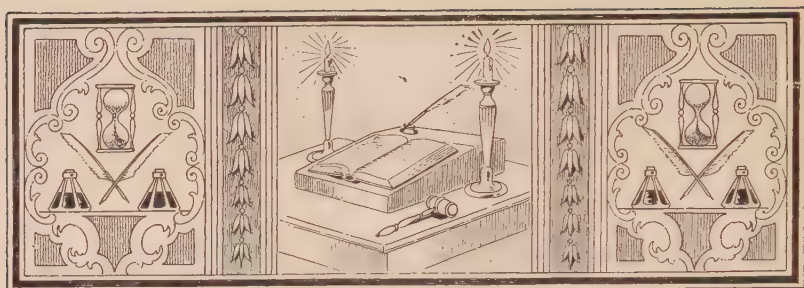
REV. WALTER SELLON.

Charles Wesley's friend.

was through the concession made by the Christian spirit of the preachers. Sore at heart that the question had ever been raised, he rashly declared that he "had done with Conferences forever"—a resolve he afterward recalled. John wrote a month later: "Here is Charles Perronet raving 'be-

cause his friends have given up all;' and Charles Wesley, 'because they have given up nothing;' and I in the midst staring and wondering both at one and the other. I do not want to do anything more unless I could bring them over to my opinion; and I am not in haste for that. Joseph Cownley says, 'For such and such reasons I dare not hear a drunkard preach or read prayers;' I answer, I dare; but I cannot answer his reasons." So here, for a season only, the question was shelved, not as the result of any ecclesiastical opinion held by John Wesley, "but of that expediency which with him was always a moral law."

At the Leeds Conference of 1769, memorable, as we shall tell later, for the appointment of the first preachers to America, Wesley read a paper in which he advised the preachers what to do after his death. It was signed by all the preachers at the Conferences of 1773, 1774, and 1775, and was afterward superseded by his Deed of Declaration, but it is worthy of note here as showing that at the age of sixty-six he felt that Methodism would be compelled, sooner or later, to take an independent and permanent form. He referred sadly to the failure of his efforts to secure the help of even the "evangelical" clergy. Out of fifty or sixty, to whom he had addressed a circular letter on the subject, only three responded. "So I give this up," he said with much grief; "I can do no more. They are a rope of sand, and such will they continue." Of the provision he made for the continuance of his work by his loyal band of itinerants we must tell in a later chapter.



CHAPTER LXIII

The New Spiritual Republic

WESLEY ACQUITTED OF AMBITION.—NO MAN TO BE MUZZLED.—
TRAINING A DEMOCRACY.—STURDY PROTESTANTISM.—PRECEPTS
FOR PREACHERS.

DURING his lifetime John Wesley was recognized as the living center of his united societies. He was the president of every Conference. He was felt to be the father of this new people, who before were “not a people,” but “a rope of sand.” A Fernley lecturer has well said that nothing but his personal influence—spiritual, moral, and intellectual, brought to bear on each part of the wide connection by his visitation and his facile, firm, yet flexible and gentle pen, which gave him a kind of connectional ubiquity—could possibly have held together and molded the vast and locally scattered multitude which was pulsating with a new life.

At the Conference of 1766 he frankly faced the question: “What power is this which you exercise over both the preachers and the societies?” After tracing step by step the wonderful history of the societies, he affirms, “It was merely in obedience to the providence of God, for the good of the people, that I first accepted this power which I never sought;

it is on the same consideration, not for profit, honor, or pleasure, that I use it this day."

It is scarcely necessary to-day to defend Wesley from the charge of ambition and egotism in the exercise of this patriarchal authority. The accompanying facsimile of a letter by Southey shows that this brilliant biographer, whose *Life of Wesley* is an English classic, was convinced of his error in bringing this charge against the man whom he otherwise so highly honored. "Mr. Alexander Knox has convinced me that I was mistaken in supposing ambition entered largely into Mr. Wesley's actuating impulses." Southey's letter has been inserted in the latest English edition of his *Life of Wesley*. It was published in facsimile in the *Cornish Banner*, 1846.

"Does not Methodism . . . represent Christian democracy within the Church, in opposition to the supremacy of a few great ones?" says the Lutheran Church historian, Hagenbach. Contrasting Wesley with Zinzendorf, "who could never lay aside the count," this German onlooker observes of Wesley: "Nature had made him a man for the masses, and, notwithstanding all that native nobility and dignity by which he impressed everybody, there was in him a true absence of everything that savored of haughtiness." Although, inspired by the purest motives and for the good of the people, he maintained his leadership to the last, no leader of men was ever more willing to take counsel with others. With aristocratic blood in his veins, he founded the most democratic Church in Christendom. He encouraged the utmost freedom of discussion in his Conferences. He would have no man muzzled. This was laid down in his second Conference as a principle:

"Q. 6. How can we effectually provide that everyone may speak freely whatever is in his heart?

Kew. 17 Aug. 1835

Dear Sir

I am much obliged to you for your letter & for your kind offer to lend me such books as may render my life of Wesley, less incomplete.

The edition of his works (1809-13) in 17 volumes (the one containing also the Index included) I have. I will therefore only trouble you for those volumes of the new edition that contain the Memoirs, life, & the additional letters, - & also for Black's early History of the Wesleys, - which I had never before heard of.

Adam Clarke's Memoirs of the Family I have, & mean to make use of it. Indeed if you tell me when you have inspected his additional matter, that his second volume will in your opinion be worth waiting for, - I shall much rather wait for it. than lose the opportunity of making my new edition as correct as I can -

My intention is to incorporate in it whatever new information has been brought forward by subsequent biographers, & of course to correct every error that has been pointed out or that I myself can discover. Mr Alexander Knox has convinced me that I was mistaken in supposing ~~that~~ ambition entered largely into the Wesley's extraordinary impulses. Upon this subject he wrote a long & most admirable paper, & gave me permission to annex it to my own work. However it might be repeated. The Editor D. & make such alterations in the book as are required in consequence.

The Wesleyan leaders never committed a greater mistake than when they treated me as an enemy.

I shall be greatly obliged to you for any documents in the which you can supply me. - I have some interesting matter (direct & collateral) to add, nothing I think material to alter, except on the one point upon which I had judged injuriously of the Wesley. But my work will not be the more palatable on this account to those who have declared war against it.

I remain Dear Sir & believe me
with many thanks & with sincere respect

Yours very truly

J^r James Nichols Esq
66 Notting Square.

Robert Southey.

SOUTHEY'S LETTER, IN WHICH HE WITHDREW HIS CHARGE
THAT WESLEY WAS AMBITIOUS.

From the engraved facsimile in the Cornish Banner.

“A. By taking care to check no one, either by word or look, even though he should say what was quite wrong.

“Q. 7. How shall we provide that every point may be fully and thoroughly settled?

“A. Let us beware of making haste or showing any impatience, whether of delay or of contradiction.”

This freedom was guarded from abuse by the skillful classification of questions to be considered and the maintenance of a high spiritual tone.

The marvelous adaptation of Wesley’s organization to the needs of a growing democracy has been noted by other observers as well as Hagenbach. A Frenchman, M. Cercheval-Clarigny, writing in the *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, says that the “wisely graduated hierarchy of Methodism enables it to extend itself even to the farthest limits of civilization; by the same arrangement it reaches the lowest strata of society.” It will be seen as we advance that the people were trained in the art of self-government and in the conduct of church business; and the government of their “wisely graduated hierarchy” was “broad-based upon the people’s will.” Does not this training in businesslike habits within the Methodist churches account for the fact that to-day in the new parish councils in the rural districts of England so large a proportion of the popularly elected councilors are Methodist class leaders and local preachers? We could name villages in Staffordshire where almost the only men among the working classes capable of availing themselves of the recent extension of local self-government were these disciples of Methodist methods. Uninteresting and complicated as Methodist polity and the doings of “Conference” may appear to the casual observer, to those who follow its development the history has national significance.

The liberal Protestant spirit of Wesley's leadership is manifest in the record of the London Conference of 1747. Bennet notes, "It was then inquired, How far does each of us agree to submit to the unanimous judgment of the rest?"

"And it was answered, In speculative things each can only submit as far as his judgment shall be convinced; in every practical point, as far as we can without wounding our several consciences.

"Can a Christian submit any farther than this to any man, or number of men, upon earth?"

"It is undeniably plain he cannot: either to pope, council, bishop, or convocation. And this is that grand principle of every man's right to private judgment, in opposition to implicit faith in man, on which Calvin, Luther, Melancthon, and all the ancient reformers, both at home and abroad, proceeded, 'Every man must think for himself, since every man must give an account for himself to God.'"

The foundation principle of the Conference was thus affirmed to be sturdily Protestant. And yet Wesley's foes declared him to be a papist, and clerics in our own day claim him as a High Churchman! His early ecclesiastical grave-clothes had now quite fallen from him.

The social breadth of Methodism is illustrated by another note of the same Conference. It was asked:

"Q. Ought we not to have a longer time of probation for the rich before we admit them into our society?"

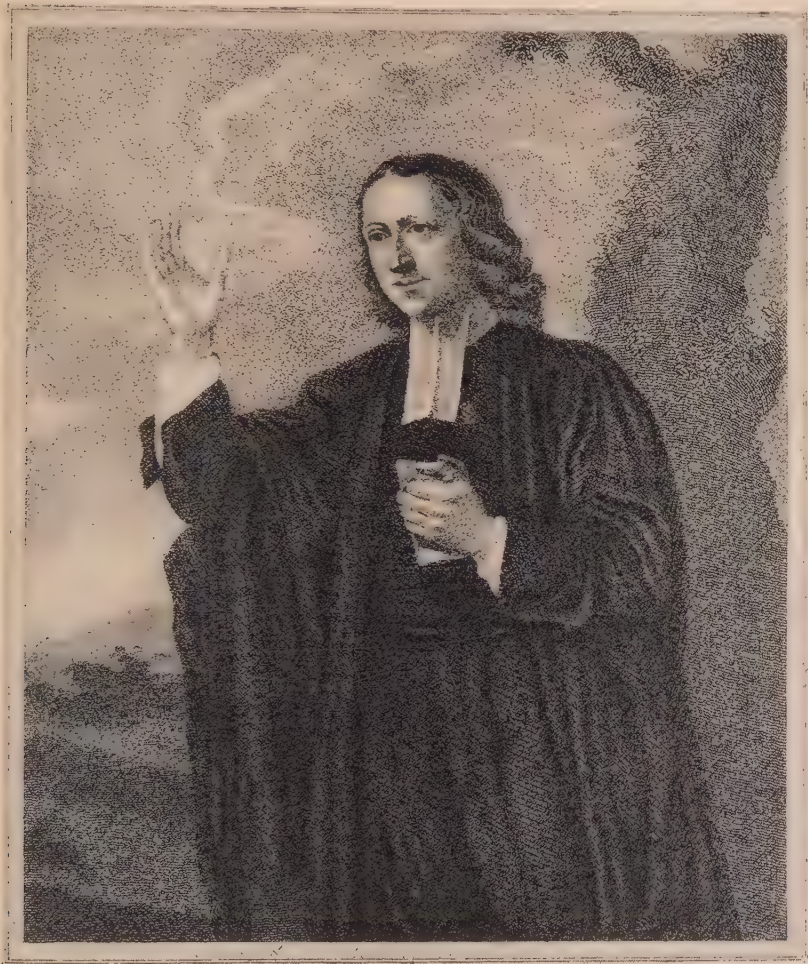
"A. It seems not. But neither should we have a shorter. Let either rich or poor stay three months.

"Q. How shall we more effectually avoid respect of persons?"

"A. 1. Let us take care to visit the poor as the rich.
2. Let us strictly examine our hearts, whether we are not

more willing to preach to the rich than to the poor. 3. We will speak to the poor at the chapel as often as to the rich."

At the first Conference it was agreed that lay preachers



ENGRAVED BY FRY FROM A SCARCE PRINT BY BLAND, 1765.

JOHN WESLEY AT THE AGE OF SIXTY-THREE.

should only be employed "in cases of necessity." At the third Conference it became evident that this "necessity" was

becoming increasingly imperative, and we find in 1747 the beginning of the series of examinations which Wesley instituted into the qualifications for the itinerancy. The important question was asked:

“Q. How shall we try those who believe they are moved by the Holy Ghost and called of God to preach?

“A. Inquire, 1. Do they know in whom they have believed? Have they the love of God in their hearts? And are they holy in all manner of conversation? 2. Have they gifts (as well as grace) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding? Have they a right judgment in the things of God? Have they a just conception of the salvation by faith? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly? 3. Have they success? Do they not only so speak as generally either to convince or affect the hearts?”

The territorial division of the country early necessitated a gradation of office among the preachers. In the most incidental “common-sense manner” a primitive episcopacy of the purest type was thus formed, without the name. The preacher in charge of a circuit was called an assistant (to Wesley), and his colleagues were helpers, both to the assistant and Wesley. At the third Conference we also find the third office, exhorter, recognized. The religious life of the preachers of each grade was the primary qualification, but from the first their intellectual training was provided for, as the lists of books in the early Minutes show. “Read the most useful books,” was a minute at Leeds in 1766. “Steadily spend all the morning in this employ, or at least five hours in twenty-four. . . . ‘But I have no taste for reading.’ Contract a taste for it by use, or return to your trade.” This

applied especially to the itinerants, for whom a better financial provision was made about this time.

Wesley's common sense is evident in the crisp sentences of the "smaller advices about preaching" in 1746. After advising that assistants should never preach more than twice a day, unless on Sunday or special occasions, the minute enjoins:

"1. Be sure to begin and end precisely at the time appointed. 2. Sing no hymns of your own composing. 3. Endeavor to be serious, weighty, solemn, in your whole deportment before the congregation. 4. Choose the plainest text you can. 5. Take care not to ramble from your text, but keep close to it, and make out what you undertake. 6. Always suit the subject to the audience. 7. Beware of allegorizing or spiritualizing too much. 8. Take care of anything awkward or affected, either in your gesture or pronunciation. 9. Tell each other if you observe anything of this kind."

A question of intense interest to all who, like Wesley, are engaged in evangelizing the masses also occurs at this third Conference:

"Q. What sermons do we find by experience to be attended with the greatest blessing?

"A. 1. Such as are most close, convincing, and practical. 2. Such as have most of Christ the Priest, the Atonement. 3. Such as urge the heinousness of men living in contempt or ignorance of him."



CHAPTER LXIV

Building the Bulwarks—1744-1770

PROTESTANT FRANCISCANS.—THE PREACHER'S HORSE.—WIVES AND CHILDREN.—THE FIRST LIST OF STATIONS.—CIRCUITS, CHAPELS, DOCTRINES, AND DISCIPLINE.

THE early preachers did not take a vow of poverty on entering the itinerancy, but the Frenchman, Lelièvre, in his charming *Life of Wesley*, has well said, "They practiced a voluntary course of self-renunciation that was never excelled by the followers of St. Francis." One of the rules was, "Take no money of anyone. If they give you food when you are hungry, or clothes when you need them, it is good, but not silver or gold. Let there be no pretense to say we grow rich by the Gospel." Receiving their daily supplies from the society, they were only paid, in money, enough to cover their traveling expenses, and these were very small, most of them walking long distances. John Jane, for instance, traveled to join Wesley on his way to Ireland. He spent seven nights on the road, for six of which he was entertained by entire strangers. He reached Holyhead with one penny left. A few months later a walk from Epworth to Hainton threw him into a fatal fever. He passed away with a smile on his face, saying, "I find the love of God in Christ

Jesus." His clothes, hat, and wig were not thought sufficient to meet his funeral charges of thirty-seven shillings. All the money he had was one shilling and four pence—"enough," Wesley adds, "for any unmarried preacher of the Gospel to leave his executors."

Thomas Olivers, who wrote the fine hymn, "The God of Abraham praise," set up in business, but Wesley desired him to give it up and go to Cornwall. He had not money to buy a horse, so he put his saddlebags with books and linen across his shoulders and set out from Bradford, in Wilts, on foot, October 24, 1753. At Tiverton a gentleman asked him why he was without a horse, and offered to pay for one. Olivers hesitated long, with manly independence; but, after consulting a friend, he gratefully accepted the offer, and bought a two-and-a-half-year-old colt for £5, which he still rode at the end of twenty-five years. He traveled comfortably on him one hundred thousand miles, preaching the Gospel, and says truly enough that God had provided him with such a horse "as, in many respects, none of my brethren could ever boast of."

Christopher Hopper writes: "Now God raised up many preachers, men eminent for gifts and graces. Some of them continued local, and some are itinerant preachers to this day. The latter end of 1749 I left the Dales and the dear children God had given me. I rode to the Smeals, where I parted with my dear wife and friends with many tears. In those days we had no provision made for preachers' wives, no funds, no stewards. He that had a staff might take it, go without, or stay at home."

The married itinerants, however, could not honorably maintain their families thus. John Nelson, as we have seen, worked at his trade when he was not preaching. William Shent, whose name appears on the accompanying facsimile of

Janu. 29. 1752

It is agreed by us whose names are underwritten

1. That if we hear any Ill of each other, we will not listen, or willingly inquire after any Ill concerning each other:

2. That if we do hear any Ill of each other, we will not be forward to believe it:

3. That as soon as possible we will communicate what we hear, by speaking or writing to the Person concerned:

4. That till we have done this, we will not write or speak a Syllable of it to any other Person whatsoever:

5. That neither will we mention it after we have done this, to any other Person:

6. That we will not make any Exception to any of these Rules, unless we think ourselves absolutely obliged in Conscience so to do.

John Jones
John Nelson
William Sherrill
John Stairne

John Wesley
Charles Wesley
John: Lymbath.
Perronet
Jonth Reeves
Jos. Cornaby
Monnet
Tho: Maxfield.
J. Downes.

a document signed by the preachers in 1752, was a barber in Briggate, Leeds. When he became a preacher he employed assistants in his business, to which he returned at intervals, and his shop was a center of Methodist influence. It had been a place of general resort for gossip, and when the barber became a Christian rich and poor among his customers heard his strange tale of conversion until it became the talk of the town.

But, in order to support their families, many of the first preachers were compelled to give up traveling. The Conference of 1752 tried to remedy this state of affairs by recommending that the societies should in the future pay each preacher the annual sum of £12. For many years, however, this was almost a dead letter. In 1769 a connectional allowance of £10 a year was provided for each preacher's wife, and the next year we find a preacher's house in the principal Methodist centers. In 1774 the rule was made that "every circuit shall find the preacher's wife a lodging, coal, and candles, or £15 per year" to procure them for herself. An allowance of £4 a year was made for each child.

The question of the education of the preachers' children occupied the Conference of 1748. The school at Kingswood was enlarged, with the help of £800 received from some un-



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH.

WILLIAM SHENT'S HOUSE.

The site and probably the house in which the first Methodist sermon in Leeds was preached, 1743.

known lady, and a schoolroom, separate from that used for the colliers' school, was provided. A very elaborate plan, extending to the very details of diet, was drawn up by Wesley, and the stringent rules suggest the reflection that Wesley was never blessed with any children of his own. The course of study was encyclopædic. The discipline severe. But Kingswood School was a marvelous advance upon any school in the kingdom, for boys of from six to twelve years old, in the range and quality of its teaching. In celebrating its third jubilee, at midsummer in 1898, its boys and masters were justly proud of its splendid educational record and its high place among the public schools of England.

The division of the whole country into circuits first appears in the Conference Minutes of 1746, and we here give Bennet's copy of the first List of Stations, and the first Quarterly Plan:

“ How are your circuits divided?

“ A. Into seven. 1. London (which includes Surrey, Kent, Essex, Brentford, Egham, Windsor, Wycombe). 2. Bristol (which includes Somersetshire, Portland, Wilts, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire). 3. Cornwall. 4. Evesham (which includes Shrewsbury, Leominster, Hereford, and from Stroud to Wednesbury). 5. Yorkshire (which includes Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutlandshire, Lincolnshire). 6. Newcastle. 7. Wales.

“ Who are our present assistants?

“ A. Jonathan Reeves, John Bennet, John Haughton, John Nelson, James Wheatley, John Trembath, Thomas Westell, Thomas Richards, John Downes, Thos. Meyrick, Thos. Maxfield, Francis Walker; perhaps Thos. Hardwick, James Jones, Samuel Larwood, Wm. Heard, Wm. Walker, Jos. Cownley.

“ Q. How are these places to be supplied for this quarter?

“ A. As far as we can yet see, thus:

Circuit.	June.	July.	August.
1. London.	J.W. J.R. T.R.	J.W. To.M. J.R.	C.W. Jo.B. Jo.D.
2. Bristol.	J.M. T.Md. J.W.	C.W. T.R. T.H.	T.R. T.J.
3. Cornwall.	C.W. T. Mk. J.Tr.	Jo.Tr.	T.R. F.W.
4. Evesham.	J.W. Ja.Jo.	Ja.J. T. Jo.Co.	Jas.Co.
5. Yorkshire.	To.Ha. To.W.	J.H. J.B. Ja.W.	J.T. Jo.N. Ja.W.
6. Newcastle.	Ja.W. Jo.R.	J.N. T.We. S.L.	S.L. T.W. Jo.W.
7. Wales:	Mr.M.	T.R.	J.W.

The first Methodist census appeared at the Leeds Conference of 1766, when forty circuits were reported, but London and other circuits made no return. Next year the returns were more complete and record a membership of 25,911.

The quarterly meeting of the circuits took definite shape in 1750, when a plan for conducting this important church court was suggested. Its constitution was not clearly defined till 1852. The system of circuit and connectional finance was developed slowly, without any general plan at the beginning, revealing the same absence of desire to form a separate system from the Establishment as the rest of Wesley's system. In 1763 the question appears at Conference, “How may we raise a general fund?” and this marks the beginning of connectional revenue as subsidiary to circuit funds. The purpose of the fund was clearly stated, and it was devoted to chapel-building, to the evangelization of destitute places in Britain and Ireland, and to the expense of legal protection from the violence of mobs and clerical magistrates, every suit in the King's Bench costing from £50 to £60.

The chapels were legally settled upon trustees in 1749, and at the Manchester Conference of 1765 a secretary was appointed to examine the deeds and see that vacancies among trustees were filled. The regular annual publication of the

Minutes also began at this latter Conference, and the first provision for the "worn-out preachers" having been made two years previously, the title of "Superannuated Preachers" appears in the Minutes for the first time. At this session the Member's Ticket was permanently adopted.

The conversations on doctrine resulted in the terse re-statement from time to time of the great evangelical truths. At the Bristol Conference of 1768 Wesley called special attention to the doctrine of sanctification. He commenced the exercise of discipline for the preservation of the purity of the societies before the first Conference was held. At Newcastle the society was purged of one hundred and forty unworthy members. The reasons for their expulsion were significant. Two were excluded for retailing spirituous liquors, two for swearing, two for sabbath-breaking, seventeen for drunkenness, three for quarreling, twenty-nine for lightness and carelessness, four for railing, one for laziness. Wesley made a firm stand against the evil of smuggling, and set himself to root it out of his societies.

The Methodist preachers were required to exercise over each other the most faithful vigilance, and at every Conference after 1767 the question was asked: "Are there any objections to any of the preachers?" who were named one by one. This practice is still maintained. Wesley regarded the maintenance of doctrine, experience, right conduct, and discipline as essential to the permanency of Methodism, and held that they must not be separated. "The first time I was in the company of the Rev. John Wesley," once wrote a correspondent of the New York Evangelist, "I asked him what must be done to keep Methodism alive when he was dead. To which he immediately answered: 'The Methodists must take heed of their doctrine, their experience, their practice,

and their discipline. If they attend to their doctrines only, they will make the people antinomians; if to the experimental part of religion only, they will make them enthusiasts; if to the practical part only, they will make them Pharisees; and if they do not attend to their discipline, they will be like persons who bestow much pains in cultivating their garden, and put no fence round it to save it from the wild boars of the forest.' ”



CHAPTER LXV

Wesley's Last University Sermon

THE FAMOUS UNIVERSITY PULPIT.—AN IMPRESSIVE SCENE.—AN ANGRY VICE CHANCELLOR.—DR. KENNICOTT AND JUDGE BLACKSTONE.—FAREWELL TO OXFORD.

WESLEY owed much to his Oxford training. It had given him a larger way of looking at men, books, and things in general, a clear and logical style of writing, and the indefinable tone that marks the best type of university man. At Oxford he had guided the Holy Club, received the name of Methodist, and practiced the social charities of the prison, the workhouse, and the school.

Several times he had walked in solemn procession on All Saints' Days with the rector, fellows, and scholars, all surpliced, followed by the exhibitioners and the commoners, from his college chapel to All Saints' Church to celebrate his favorite festival. He had never ceased since, he tells us, to give God solemn thanks for the lives and death of his saints. After a "solemn season of praise" in West Street Chapel, in 1766, he writes: "On this day in particular I commonly find the truth of these words:

"The Church triumphant in his love,
Their mighty joys we know;
They praise the Lamb in hymns above,
And we in hymns below."

On a memorable Easter Day he had preached in "our college chapel," thrilling with the hope of his own spiritual resurrection. In St. Michael's Church, Carfax, the castle, Bocardo, and St. Thomas's Workhouse he had proclaimed the truths for which the Oxford martyrs suffered. And now, in 1744, for the last time he was to preach the university sermon in the famous Church of St. Mary the Virgin.

St. Mary's is the university church where Cranmer was tried in 1555, and where he astonished friends and enemies alike by revoking his recantation in the words, "And forasmuch as my

hand offended, writing contrary to my heart, my hand shall first be punished therefor; for, may I come to the fire, it shall be first burned." Opposite the pulpit from which Wesley preached may be seen to-day the ledge for the plat-



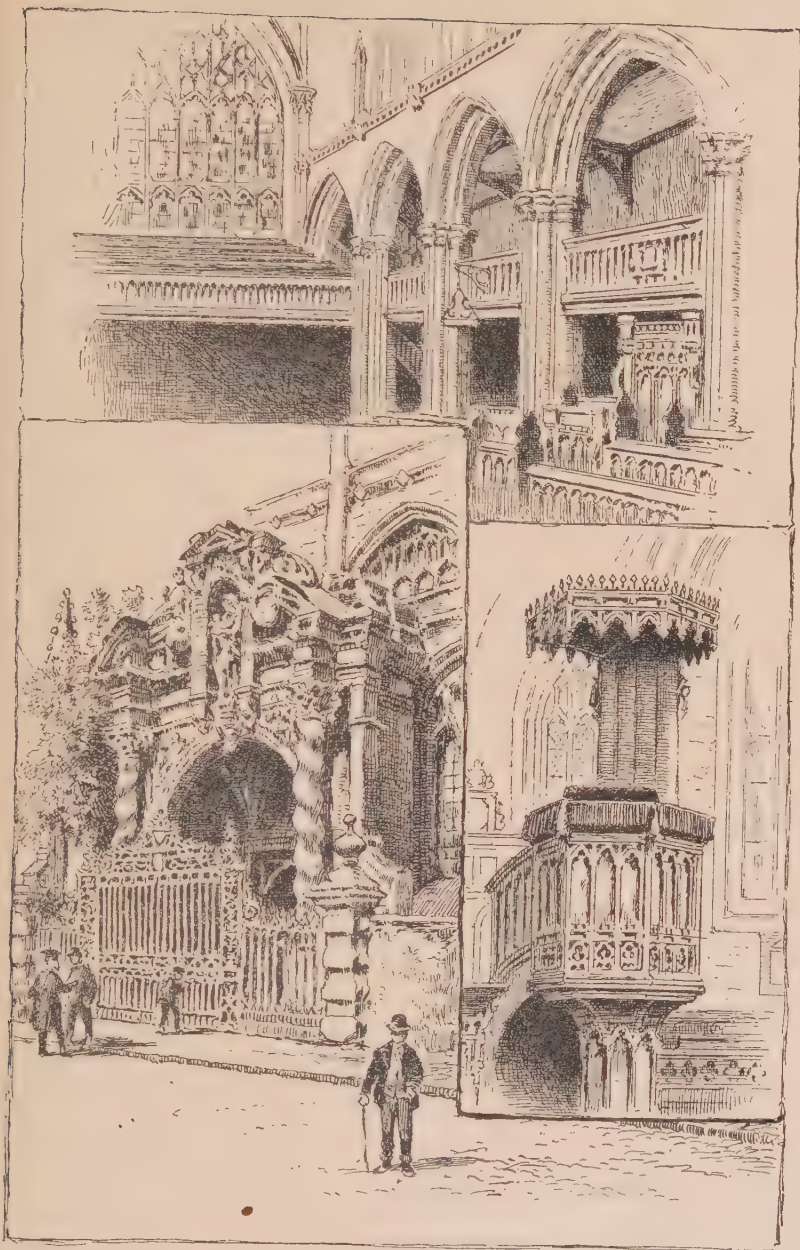
FROM THE DRAWING BY H. FITTON.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, OXFORD.

form from which Cranmer heard a sermon of a very different character. From this same pulpit, in the days of Elizabeth, a layman preached in a style the opposite to that enjoined by Wesley on his lay preachers; for, if Antony à Wood's report may be trusted, Mr. Taverner, the high sheriff, "of pure charity," came and gave the academicians a sermon beginning, "Arriving at the Mount of St. Mary's . . . I have brought you some fine biscuits, baked in the oven of charity, carefully conserved for the chickens of the Church, the sparrows of the Spirit, and the sweet swallows of Salvation." In St. Mary's, Queen Elizabeth herself listened for three days in succession to disputations lasting each "four mortal hours," concluding with a speech of her own in Latin. Here Archbishop Laud preached the Romish doctrine of sacramental grace, and the statue of the Virgin and Child, over the beautiful porch with twisted columns, figured in the articles of impeachment which cost him his head.

Hither came John Wesley on St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1744. He had preached here on "Salvation by Faith" in 1738, and the sermon is the first in his published volumes. His Latin sermon on Isaiah i, 21, of three years later, has not been printed. "The Almost Christian" was preached in the same year. Now again, as a fellow of the university, he is bound to take his turn in the pulpit or pay three guineas for a substitute. Charles Wesley, Mr. Piers, and Mr. Meriton walk with him to this memorable service.

Its ancient ceremonial is observed to this day. As the clock strikes ten the congregation rises, and a solemn procession enters the church, headed by the beadles, who carry the vice chancellor's insignia of office; then follows the vice chancellor himself, then the preacher, the proctors in their velvet sleeves and old-fashioned bands, and the doctors of



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

AFTER WOODCUTS.

GLIMPSES OF ST. MARY'S, OXFORD.

Porch, with statue of the Virgin. The undergraduates' gallery.

The pulpit.

divinity in gorgeous scarlet robes. When the procession reaches the central aisle the vice chancellor stops, and bows to the preacher, and then walks to his throne, while Wesley ascends the pulpit opposite. A hymn is sung, and the preacher recites the "bidding prayer," which includes a long list of names, beginning with the king and ending with the chancellor. Then comes the sermon.

In the body of the church sit the vice chancellor, the proctors, the heads and dignitaries of colleges, masters of arts, and bachelors. Charles Wesley and his friends are there; and among the fellows of All Souls' sits William Blackstone, the coming commentator on English law, and once a Charterhouse boy like the preacher. The aisles and seats near the door are thronged with townsfolk. It is Oxford's race week, and some who heard Charles Wesley preach yesterday in the Old Inn Yard are here, and Methodists, also, in plain attire. Among the undergraduates who fill the gallery is Benjamin Kennicott, of Wadham College, who is to become a famous Hebrew scholar. Young Kennicott fixes his eyes on Wesley, takes in every detail of his appearance, and writes afterward to a friend: "His black hair, quite smooth and parted very exactly, added to a peculiar composure in his countenance, showed him to be an uncommon man. His prayer was short, soft, and conformable to the rules of the university. His text (Acts iv, 31), 'And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.' He spoke the text very slowly and with an agreeable emphasis."

Then followed the beautiful description of scriptural Christianity, and afterward the practical application which gave such dire offense. The dignitaries in the body of the church grew angry and restless, although the touching appeal to "the venerable men" who were responsible for the guidance

of the young life of Oxford was based on facts to which every leading Oxford man of that century bears painful witness.

Charles Wesley says: "Never have I seen a more attentive congregation. They did not let a word slip them. Some of the heads stood up the whole time, and fixed their eyes on him. If they can endure sound doctrine like this, he will surely leave a blessing behind him. The vice chancellor sent after him and desired his notes, which he sealed up and sent immediately. We walked back in form, the little band of us four; for of the rest durst none join us. I was a little diverted at the coyness of an old friend, Mr. Wells, who sat just before me, but took great care to turn his back upon me all the time—which did not hinder my seeing through him. At noon my brother set out for London and I for Bristol."

John Wesley notes in his Journal that it was St. Bartholomew's Day, and, of course, the anniversary of the ejection of two thousand ministers from the National Church by the Act of Uniformity. He adds: "I preached, I suppose, the last time at St. Mary's. Be it so. I am now clear of the blood of these men. I have delivered my own soul. The beadle came to me afterward and told me the vice chancellor had sent him for my notes. I sent them without delay, not without admiring the wise providence of God. Perhaps few men of note would have given a sermon of mine the reading if I had put it into their hands; but by this means it came to be read, probably more than once, by every man of eminence in the university."

Kennicott objected only to Wesley's pointed rebukes, and said: "Had these things been omitted and his censures moderated, I think his discourse, as to style and delivery, would have been uncommonly pleasing to others as well as to myself. He is allowed to be a man of great parts, and

that by the excellent dean of Christ Church (Dr. Conybeare), for the day he preached the dean said of him, 'John Wesley will always be thought a man of sound sense, though an enthusiast.' "

Blackstone also wrote of the service in a letter dated August 28, 1744, which we give in facsimile: "We were yesterday entertained at Oxford by a Curious Sermon from Wesley Ye Methodist. Among other equally modest particulars, He informed us: 1st. That there was not one Christian among all ye heads of Houses. 2ndly. That Pride, Gluttony, Avarice, Luxury, Sensuality and Drunkenness were ye General Characteristics of all Fellows of Colleges, who were useless to a proverbial uselessness. Lastly, that ye younger part of ye University were a generation of triflers, all of them perjured and not one of them of any Religion at all. His notes were demanded by ye Vice Chancellor, but on mature deliberation, it has been thought proper to punish him by a mortifying neglect."

A writer in the Charterhouse Magazine, in which this letter of Blackstone's first appeared, well remarks that the dauntless man who never lost his temper or his courage, and who was equally ready to tackle Beau Nash at Bath or a Lancashire mob at Bolton, and had interviewed and despised the great Dr. Sacheverell while he was a boy at Charterhouse, was not likely to have been greatly overawed by the appearance of that imposing university functionary, the Esquire Bedell (we wonder, by the way, if he called on Wesley in his lappeted gown and silver-gilt poker); and it is pretty evident that the "mortifying neglect" was less a matter of punitive diplomacy than of that discretion which, even in vice chancellors, is the better part of valor. Thirty years afterward it is pleasant to find the two men, Wesley and

Blackstone, fighting side by side in the same cause, the abolition of slavery. Wesley speaks of him in his paper on slavery as "that great ornament to his profession, Judge Blackstone."

Wesley visited Oxford many times afterward, preaching only in a room or chapel. He went up to vote for a member of Parliament on a bitter day in January, 1751, at the request of the rector of his college, for whom he cherished warm affection. The university now was changing its attitude toward Wesley, and he says: "I was much surprised wherever I went at the civility of the people, gentlemen as well as others. There was no pointing, no calling of names, no, not even laughter. What can this mean? Am I become the servant of men? Or is the scandal of the cross ceased?" In the same year, on Friday, June 1, after enjoying his fellowship for twenty-six years, he resigned it in the following terms:

Ego Johannes Wesley, Collegii Lincolniensis in Academiâ Oxoniensi Socius, quicquid mihi juris est in prædictâ Societate, ejusdem Rectori et Sociis sponte ac libere resigno: illis universis et singulis perpetuam pacem ac omnimodo in Christo felicitatem exoptans.

This severed his official connection with the university, but he loved it to the last, and wrote in 1778: "Having an hour to spare, I walked to Christ Church, for which I cannot but still retain a peculiar affection. What lovely mansions are these! What is wanting to make the inhabitants happy? That without which no rational creature can be happy, the experimental knowledge of God." Two years later he said, "I love the very sight of Oxford;" and when he was eighty he walked through the city which was "swiftly improving in everything but religion." The hall at Christ Church, the Meadow, Magdalen Walks, and the White Walk still filled the old man with admiration, and he declared them finer than anything he had seen in Europe.

my, personally, & Blackstone were of general character, chiefs of all
schools of colleges, who were useful to a practical Whig. Still, & of
younger (not of a University) were a generation of scholars, all of them per-
jured, & not one of them of any Religion at all. His views were dominated by
of Vice-Chancellor, but on balance well-bred, it has been thought proper
to permit him by a mortifying neglect. I have nothing further to add
but yet I see my parcel safe & am particularly obliged to return you
my thanks for that & all other instances of your friendship & kindness.
I am sure. Your letter (with additions) I send to your son, & it is
seemed agreeable both to you & him, could not be otherwise to, Sir.

Yours most obliged humble Servant,

Wm. Blackstone

28 Aug. 1744.

d. J. Owen.

Dear Sir

I should long ago have discharged y^e Debt that is due both to You & Good-Masters, had not I heard that M^r Matthews had it in charge to acquaint you & my Cousin, that my Uncle & Aunt Bigg desire to be excused from waiting on you this Summer. I am now able to inform you, that they propose to set out from Oxon to morrow for Worthing; so that next week they will be, I presume, at Liberty to wait upon my Cousin, unless she makes it her Choice to entertain her Bro^r that week at Sparsholt. However that be, if I could know whether y^e young Gentleman does for certain come home, I would steal one night, if possible, from Oxford to ask him how he does. The whole Family at St. Church is well, nor have we been a bit y^e less agreeably entertained there, for y^e want of y^e extraordinary Civility of a Gentleman who perhaps has not always common. It is, I am confident have added much to our satisfaction to have had Miss Richmond among us, to whom my self, B^r & I must desire our Compliments. Harry is at Hall, & Charles is soon going into Hampshire to take care of a Church for some months, w^{ch} is about 1 mile from Hall, 4. from Worthing, & 3 from Marydown. We were last Friday entertained at St. Mary's by a curious Sermon from Wesley y^e Methodist. Among

LEY'S LAST UNIVERSITY SERMON.

e celebrated jurist, describing Wesley's sermon in Saint Mary's.

In his Short History of the People called Methodists Wesley writes of his last university service: "I am well pleased that it should be on the very day (St. Bartholomew's Day) on which in the last century near two thousand burning and shining lights were put out at one stroke. Yet what a difference is there between their case and mine! They were turned out of house and home, and all that they had; whereas I am only hindered from preaching, without any other loss, and that in a kind of honorable manner; it being determined that, when my next turn to preach came, they would pay another person to preach for me. And so they did twice or thrice, even to the time that I resigned my fellowship."

The sermon may be found in his published works, numbered IV, and entitled Scriptural Christianity. Many exaggerated statements were rumored respecting it. This induced him to publish it in pamphlet form, with this preface: "It was not my design, when I wrote, ever to print the latter part of the following sermon; but the false and scurrilous accounts of it which have been published in almost every corner of the nation constrain me to publish the whole, just as it was preached, that men of reason may judge for themselves."



CHAPTER LXVI

"Treason! Popery!"

NATIONAL ANXIETY.—ACCUSED OF POPERY.—METHODIST LOYALTY.—
CHARLES WESLEY CHARGED WITH TREASON.—THE PRIEST OF
OSMOTHERLY.

THE year in which Wesley preached his last university sermon was one of feverish national anxiety. England was threatened with a French invasion for the purpose of enthroning the exiled Prince Charles Edward Stuart, "the Young Pretender." The people feared a return of popery and Stuart tyranny. Rewards were offered for the head of the Pretender. All papists were forbidden to remain within ten miles of London. Loyal addresses were presented to the king. The army and navy were recruited, and in March, 1744, war was declared.

Two days after the news of the threatened invasion reached Parliament the London Methodists held a day of fasting and prayer. When the proclamation against papists was published Wesley canceled his country appointments and remained in London, lest his leaving should appear to confirm the rumor of his being a papist. A magistrate and officers came to search a house at Spitalfields where he was staying. Wesley satisfied them with an explanation of the principles

and practices of Methodism. A gaping, staring, shouting mob was at the door, but did no harm. At the request of his friends he wrote an address to the king on behalf of the Methodists, in which he described them as "a people scattered and trodden under foot; traduced as inclined to popery, and consequently as disaffected to his majesty." They were, however, "a part of the Protestant Church established in these kingdoms; united together for this, and no other, end: to promote justice, mercy, and truth; the glory of God, and peace and good will among men; detesting the fundamental doctrines of the Church of Rome, and steadily attached to his majesty's royal person and illustrious house."

Charles Wesley feared that the sending of this address in the name of the Methodists would appear to constitute them a separate body from the Establishment, and the address was laid aside and never reached the king, although it was published in Wesley's Journal.

About a fortnight later, however, Wesley was summoned before the Surrey justices. "Has anyone anything to lay to my charge?" he asked. The courage of the accusers appears to have failed at the last moment, for none replied. At length a justice said, "Sir, are you willing to take the oaths to his majesty, and to sign the declaration against popery?" Wesley replied, "I am;" took the oath of loyalty, and returned home in peace.

Charles Wesley faced the second charge. A magistrate at Wakefield had summoned certain persons to give "information against one Westley, or any other of the Methodist speakers, for speaking any treasonable words." No one expected "Westley" himself to appear. When he presented himself before the three justices, one of whom was a clergyman, he was told that they had nothing to say to him. He

was not to be shaken off thus, knowing that, unless he fully cleared himself and his people from a charge of disloyalty, their enemies would soon avail themselves of this slander to stir up a violent persecution. The magistrates told him they were informed that the Methodists constantly prayed for the Pretender in all their societies or "nocturnal meetings." He replied that, on the contrary, they constantly prayed for King George by name. He handed them copies of the hymns sung by the Methodists, with John Wesley's Appeals and other publications. "I am as true a Church of England man, and as loyal a subject, as any man in the kingdom," he added. All the witnesses but one disappeared when it was known that Charles Wesley himself would confront them, and this one started back, trembling in every limb, when he saw him. This man was at last compelled to make a statement. "I have nothing to say against the gentleman," he said; "I only heard him pray that the Lord would call home his banished." That beautiful Bible phrase was the occasion of this malicious charge! "Now, gentlemen," Charles Wesley said, when he heard the accusation, "give me leave to explain my own words." The magistrates at last acknowledged in explicit terms that his loyalty was unquestionable. He returned to Birstall and found the mob, expecting a different verdict, had begun to pull down John Nelson's house. When they heard the lusty singing of the Methodists returning in triumph they fled.

It was the threatened French invasion that led, as we have seen, to the enlistment by force of John Nelson, Thomas Beard, John Downes, and others. John Slocomb in Cornwall and John Healey and Thomas Westell in Nottingham were similarly arrested. The horses of the latter were formally demanded for the king's service, but the searchers

found they had none! John Downes was clapped into Lincoln jail. The drunken aristocratic spendthrift who tried to press John Wesley himself at St. Just dragged one poor Methodist tanner from his family, though he was past age for the army. The same persecutor seized two clergymen helpers, Meriton and Graves, and hurried the latter from his bed to a man-of-war. The Methodists subscribed considerable sums to buy out their brethren, but the editor of the *Westminster Journal*, of June 8, 1745, hoped that the magistrates would be proof against golden bribes, "for such wretches are incendiaries in a nation."

Few men traversed England during those days of wild rumor with such fearless souls as the Wesleys. Charles, in 1745, visited Bristol, Wales, and the West of England. John went from London to Bristol, then to Cornwall, and spent four months in two journeys to the north. We see him with Thomas Moss riding two hundred and eighty miles on horseback, to Newcastle, at the rate of fifty miles a day. This was in February, when a thaw succeeded by frost had made the ground like glass, so that they often had to dismount and had many falls. At Gateshead Fell they came upon a pathless waste of white, and Wesley writes that they would have been lost but that "an honest man of Newcastle overtook and guided us safe into the town. Many a rough journey have I had before, but one like this I never had; between wind and hail and rain and ice and snow and driving sleet and piercing cold; but it is past—those days will return no more, and are therefore as though they had never been."

At Newcastle we find him writing a characteristic note to a brutal bully who had been abusing and stoning the

Orphan House family, and had pushed and cursed him in the street:

ROBERT YOUNG: I expect to see you between this and Friday, and to hear from you that you are sensible to your fault; otherwise, in pity of your soul, I shall be obliged to inform the magistrates of your assaulting me yesterday in the street.

I am your real friend,

JOHN WESLEY.

Within a few hours Robert Young came and meekly promised to amend his ways.

An incident occurred at this time which shows that, although Wesley was willing to defend himself and his people from false charges, he did not fear incurring even the charge of Romanism if spiritual interests were at stake. A Roman Catholic priest came to see him at the orphanage, from Osmotherly, sixty miles south of Newcastle. Near this place were the picturesque ruins of a Carthusian priory, and in the village itself was an old chapel of a Franciscan convent. The grandmother of Tyerman, the Methodist historian, used to walk twelve miles, over a pathless moor, to attend this old chapel, although she understood not a word of the Latin service. Wesley's account of the priest's visit is as follows: "A gentleman called at our house who informed me that his name was Adams; that he lived at Osmotherly, in Yorkshire, and had heard so many strange accounts of the Methodists that he could not rest till he came to inquire for himself. I told him he was welcome to stay as long as he pleased if he could live on our Lenten fare. He made no difficulty of this, and willingly stayed till the Monday sennight following, when he returned home fully satisfied with his journey." The result of this strange friendship was that Wesley visited Osmotherly, calling at Northallerton on the way and preaching at an inn. Here the priest and the Quakeress, Elizabeth

Tyerman, met and heard him. He accepted an invitation to preach in the priest's house. They arrived at Osmotherly in the evening. The villagers had gone early to bed, but the priest and his friends aroused them and collected them in the chapel of the Franciscan friars. At five in the morning Wesley preached again on Romans iii, 22; "a sermon in a popish chapel on the great antipopish doctrine of justification by



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

FROM THE ENGRAVING BY LACEY.

OLD PRIORY NEAR OSMOTHERLY.

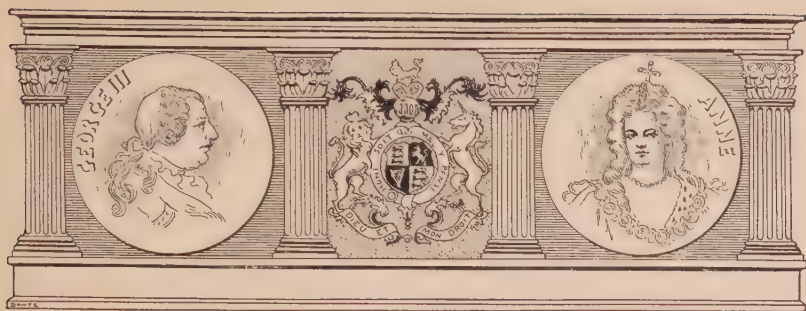
faith," part of the congregation having sat up all night for fear they should not awake in time to hear him. Writing to his brother, John said: "I found I was got into the very center of all the papists in the North of England. This hath God wrought." A society was formed soon after and a chapel erected, and in this chapel Luke Tyerman was converted.

Wesley paid sixteen visits to this place, and often stayed with the priest. In 1776 he found him "just quivering over the grave," and a year later he writes, "I found my old friend

was just dead, after living a recluse life near fifty years. From one that attended him I learned that the sting of death was gone, and he calmly delivered up his soul to God."

Wesley spent five weeks in Cornwall at the time that the attempt was made to press him for the army. At Tolcarn he was told, "Sir, all the gentlemen in these parts say that you have been a long time in France and Spain, and are now sent hither by the Pretender, and that these societies are to join him!" An odd adventure befell him at St. Just, where a gentlewoman who had been bred a papist, and had supposed Wesley to be one, found out her error. She took his place as he began to preach and "scolded, screamed, spit, and stamped, wrung her hands and distorted her face." With philosophic calmness Wesley allowed her to have the talking to herself until she was exhausted. With quiet humor he records, "I took no notice of her, good or bad."

Wesley was in London in September, 1745, when he heard that Newcastle was panic-stricken at the rumored approach of the Pretender. So starting northward, he called at Northampton to see Doddridge and address his students. At Leeds the mob stoned him and his friends, and were "ready to knock out all their brains for joy that the Duke of Tuscany was emperor." He visited the old priory at Osmotherly, and after inspecting the cells, walls, and garden expressed an opinion which it was well for his "brains" the mob did not at that time hear: "Who knows but some of the poor, superstitious monks who once served God here according to the light they had may meet us by and by in that house of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!"



CHAPTER LXVII

In the Days of the Jacobite Rebellion

PANIC-STRICKEN NEWCASTLE.—JOHN CLAYTON, THE HIGH CHURCH JACOBITE.—DR. BYROM, STENOGRAPHER AND POET.—THE YOUNG REBEL WHO BECAME A PRESIDENT.

WHEN Wesley reached Newcastle the news had just arrived that the Pretender had entered Edinburgh. The next day the mayor of Newcastle called the townspeople to arms. The Pilgrim Street Gate, just outside of which was the orphanage, was walled up. Two hundred cannon were planted on the town walls, and Wesley observes: "I could not but adore the providence of God, for it was obvious: 1. They were all planted in such a manner that no shot could touch our house. 2. The cannon on New Gate so secured us on one side, and those upon Pilgrim Street Gate on the other, that none could come near our house either way without being torn to pieces. . . . Many messengers of lies terrified the poor people of the town as if the rebels were just coming to swallow them up. Upon this the guards were increased, and abundance of country gentlemen came in with their servants, horses, and arms."

A few days later came the terrifying news that the rebels had defeated King George's troops at Preston Pans. The

more wealthy people fled from the town. Fifteen thousand soldiers were soon encamped upon the moor, and Wesley, appealing to the mayor for permission to preach to them, pleaded in manly style that religion would not make cowards of them, as some supposed. "Did those who feared God behave as cowards at Fontenoy? Did John Haime, the dragoon, betray any cowardice before or after his horse sunk under him? Or did William Clements, when he received the first ball in his left, and the second in his right arm? or John Evans, when the cannon ball took off both his legs? Did he not call all about him, as long as he could speak, to praise and fear God, and honor the king? as one who feared nothing, but lest his last breath should be spent in vain."

The soldiers listened to Wesley with respect, but he felt he did not reach their hearts, and acknowledged that a layman like John Haime, the brave dragoon, would have been more effective. Seeing some German troopers, he spoke to them in their own tongue, and they drank in every word.

The dreaded clansmen, however, did not storm Newcastle. They marched to Carlisle, Lancaster, Manchester, and Derby; then retreated. The journey hillward again was lightened by their brilliant victory at Falkirk, but the desperate battle of Culloden, on April 16, 1746, brought the daring adventure of "Prince Charlie" to a disastrous end, and the rebel lords were ignominiously beheaded on Tower Hill. Their rash leader ended his career, not unfittingly, in 1788, on the eve of that French Revolution which was so soon to make havoc of the "divinity that doth hedge a king!"

At Manchester the Pretender had found some warm supporters in two old Oxford friends of the Wesleys. One of these was the Rev. John Clayton, whose High Churchmanship led him to treat his old comrades of the Holy Club

with great coldness when they entered upon their evangelical career. Unlike the Wesleys, he was a stanch adherent of the cause of the exiled Stuarts, and when Prince Charles marched through Manchester this High Church Jacobite clergyman fell upon his knees before him and invoked the blessing of God on the young chevalier. In the Collegiate Church, now the cathedral, of which he was a fellow, Clayton preached a sermon in support of the rebels. For this treason he was compelled to leave the city for two or three years. For forty years he had the cure of souls and the education of gentlemen's sons in Salford, Manchester.

In 1756 Charles Wesley was at Manchester trying to prevent the Methodists from leaving the Established Church. He took many of them to church with him to receive the sacrament. Clayton was the preacher. But he refused to recognize his former friend, as Charles Wesley writes, "so stiff was his parochial pride, and so faithfully did he keep his covenant with his eyes not to look upon an old friend when called a Methodist."

When Clayton returned to Manchester after his temporary suspension for treason he was required to preach before the bishop who had silenced him. The daring Jacobite read as his text, "I became dumb, and opened not my mouth, for



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

OLD GRAVEL LANE CHAPEL.

Built on the site of Rev. John Clayton's garden.

thou didst it!" He kept a classical academy in Salford, and the noted Methodist chapel in Gravel Lane stands on what was once his garden. His attitude toward the Wesleys shows that he did not consider his famous contemporaries High Churchmen after their evangelical conversion.

Another friend of the Wesleys at Manchester—who did not cut their acquaintance—was Dr. Byrom. He also was a Jacobite, as the following lively account of the Pretender's visit, written by his daughter, shows: "About four o'clock the king was proclaimed. The mob shouted very cleverly. Saturday, St. Andrew's Day. I dressed me up in my white gown [it is quite clear that this young lady was a sad Jacobite] and went up to my aunt Brearcliffe's, and an officer called on us to go and see the prince. We went to Mr. Fletcher's and saw him get on horseback; and a noble sight it was. I would not have missed it for a great deal of money. When he rid out of the court he was received with as much joy and shouting almost as if he had been king without any dispute; indeed, I think scarce anybody that saw him could dispute it. As soon as he was gone the officer and we went to prayers at the old church at two o'clock by their orders. Mr. Sprigley read prayers, and prayed for the king and Prince of Wales, and named no names. . . . Secretary Murray came to let us know that the prince was at leisure; so we were all introduced and had the honor to kiss his hand. My papa was fetched prisoner (playfully, by the ladies) to do the same, as was Mr. Deacon; Mr. Cattell and Mr. Clayton did it without; the latter said grace for him."

It was from Dr. Byrom the Wesleys learned a system of shorthand writing. Charles Wesley found this of great use as secretary to General Oglethorpe. The conference with the Indians was thus recorded, and the universal alphabet

invented by Byrom was used by Mr. Ingham in forming a vocabulary of the Indian language. After 1740 John Wesley began to write his Journal in Byrom's shorthand and continued its use for fifty years.

Dr. Byrom was a warm admirer of the Mystics, and had long discussions with Wesley on their works. Their differ-

ences of opinion did not sever their friendship, though the sturdy doctor, waxing warm on one occasion, satirically addressed Wesley as "Pope John," and "Your Holiness." Wesley told him that he never expelled members from his societies for holding mystical opinions or reading even Behmen's books, "which was indifferent as the color of their hair;

but, if they would thrust their hair into other people's eyes, and trouble them with their notions, that was his reason."

Wesley thought highly of Byrom's poems. His Christmas hymn—

Christians, awake, salute the happy morn—

is in the Wesleyan Hymn Book, and is almost as widely



FROM THE ENGRAVING BY H. COOK.

JOHN BYROM, M.A., F.A.S.

known as Charles Wesley's. During the last half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the present century it was one of the most popular carols.

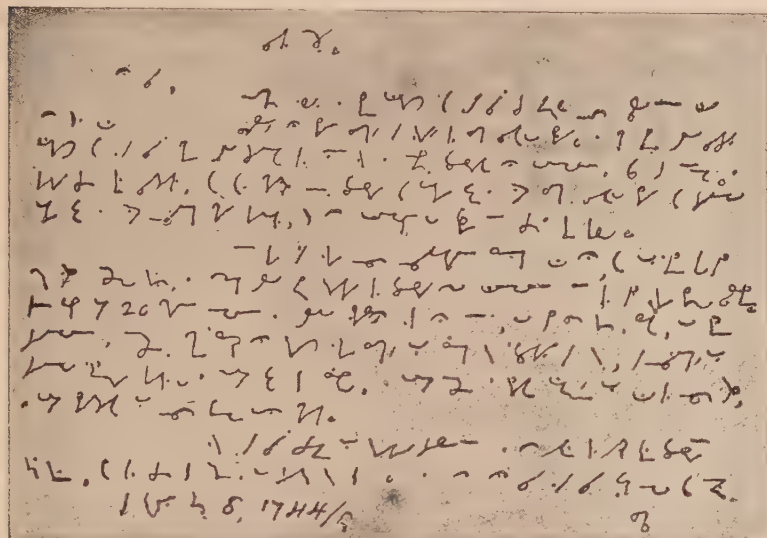
In stature Byrom was in contrast with Wesley. He was one of the tallest men in England; so that in the course of fifty years he appears to have met only two men taller than himself. If we bear this in mind when he describes himself as walking with the Wesleys through the streets of London, we can imagine the remarkable group as they walked together in company from Little Britain to St. Mary's Church, Islington, to visit Mr. Stonehouse; or as they sat together in earnest conversation and debate. Byrom's peculiarities made him extremely well known in the coffeehouses of London, where among the topics of the day Methodism and the Georgia experiment were freely discussed.

Byrom died in 1763, and was buried in the Byrom Chapel of the Collegiate Church of Manchester. A warrant was issued against his estate, and a fine of £5 actually levied and paid—one half to the informer and one half to the poor of the parish—because he was buried in a shroud "not made of sheep's wool, according to the statute." This is rather a late instance of a conviction for contravening the requirements of the act of Charles II for burying in woolen, since repealed. The reader may remember Pope's

"Odious ! in woolen ! 'twould a saint provoke,"
Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke.

One more name associated with the Jacobite rebellion is worth recording. When the rebel army retreated northward from Stirling one portion of it passed through Brechin, the Forfarshire burgh that gave Thomas Guthrie to Scotland. At Brechin a lad named Alexander Mather was fascinated by

the claymores, drums, and flags. He cared little about Jacobitism, but he was seized with a sudden impulse to join the rebels. In later years he wrote: "Out of a childish frolic I went away with a party of the rebels. But I knew



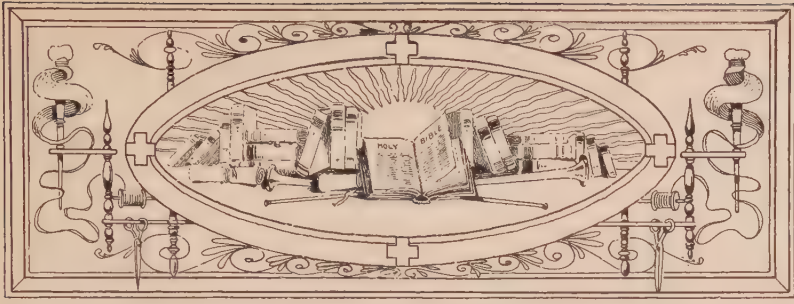
JOHN WESLEY'S SHORTHAND WRITING.

Slightly reduced facsimile.

not what I did. I hereby exposed myself to many hardships and dangers. But the Lord delivered me out of them all. Many mighty ones fell on Culloden Heath and in the way to Inverness, and indeed on every side; yet I was mercifully preserved." He must have seen the Highland clans broken and the plaided fugitives slaughtered by the Hanoverian troops. Unwounded, yet worn and haggard, he got back to Brechin; but he was not safe there, for he might have been seized and executed as a rebel. His father, either in stern condemnation of his disloyal proceedings or afraid to give him shelter, would not allow him to enter the house. Hap-

pily for him his mother was brave as well as affectionate, and took him to a relative who had a farm in the Carse of Gowry. Thence he was guided over the mountains and was kept in a sequestered nook until midsummer. In November he ventured back to Brechin, and, though arrested, was soon set free.

This adventurous youth was converted under Wesley at West Street Chapel. When he was called to Epworth Circuit as a preacher he walked there, "about a hundred and fifty miles." On his first visit to Boston he was stoned and felled to the ground, but with sturdy determination to maintain the right he faced the unfriendly magistrates, proved himself more than a match for them, and three of the rioters had to beg his pardon, promise good behavior, and pay the costs. At last we find Alexander Mather president of the Conference in 1792, the first Scotchman to hold that office. Thus did the young rebel of Culloden become the very embodiment of law and order.



CHAPTER LXVIII

Selina, Countess of Huntingdon

ARISTOCRATIC AMAZONS AT THE HOUSE OF LORDS.—WESLEY AND MRS. PENDARVES.—“SAINT SELINA.”—A FAMOUS DUCHESS.—HORACE WALPOLE AND HIS CIRCLE.

DURING the stormy debates in the House of Lords in 1738 on the depredations of the Spaniards it was resolved to exclude ladies from the galleries of the Houses of Parliament. This led to a strange scene, which is thus racily described by the witty Lady Mary Wortley Montague: “At the last warm debate in the House of Lords it was unanimously resolved there should be no crowd of unnecessary auditors; consequently the fair sex were excluded, and the gallery destined to the sole use of the House of Commons. Notwithstanding which determination a tribe of dames resolved to show on this occasion that neither men nor laws could resist them. These heroines were Lady Huntingdon, the Duchess of Queensberry, the Duchess of Ancaster, Lady Westmoreland, Lady Cobham, Lady Charlotte Edwin, Lady Archibald Hamilton and her daughter, Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Pendarves, and Lady Sanderson. I am thus particular in their names because I look upon them to be the boldest assertors and most resigned sufferers for liberty I ever read

of. They presented themselves at the door at nine o'clock in the morning, when Sir William Sanderson respectfully informed them the chancellor had made an order against their admittance. The Duchess of Queensberry, as head of the squadron, pished at the ill-breeding of a mere lawyer, and desired him to let them up stairs privately. After some modest refusals he swore he would not let them in. Her grace, with a noble warmth, answered they would come in, in spite of the chancellor and the whole House. This being reported, he then resolved to starve them out; an order was made that the door should not be opened till they had raised the siege. These Amazons now showed themselves qualified for the duty even of foot soldiers; they stood there till five in the afternoon, without food, every now and then playing volleys of thumps, kicks, and raps against the door with so much violence that the speakers in the House were scarce heard. When the Lords were not to be conquered by this the two duchesses (very well apprised of the use of stratagem in war) commanded a dead silence for half an hour; and the chancellor, who thought this a certain proof of their absence (the Commons also being very impatient to enter), gave order for the opening of the door; upon which they all rushed in, pushed aside their competitors, and placed themselves in the front rows of the gallery. They stayed there till after eleven, when the House rose, and during the debate gave applause and showed marks of dislike, not only by smiles and winks (which have always been allowed in such cases), but by noisy laughs and contempts; which is supposed to be the true reason why poor Lord Hervey spoke so miserably."

This sparkling letter throws a side light on the character of two of these daring ladies who became associated in very different ways with the Wesleys and Whitefield. Mrs. Pendarves



was the brilliant court lady with whom John Wesley was at one time deeply in love. Their remarkable correspondence, of which Dr. Rigg has given a charming account in his *Living Wesley*, had ceased four years before the siege of



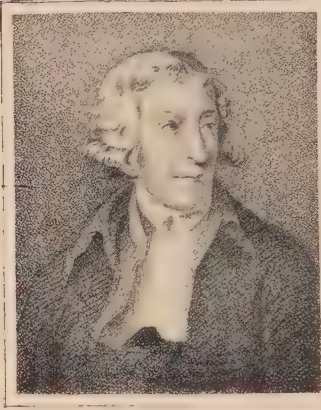
MRS. PENDARVES.

Afterward Mrs. Delany, John Wesley's correspondent.

the House of Lords by these English Amazons. Under her later name she has become known by her *Life and Letters*, which reflect so brightly the social life of her day. There can be little doubt that at one time Wesley hoped that she might join her lot with his. Several years of correspondence were interrupted by a long visit which she made to Ireland. When she made an attempt to renew the corre-

spondence, "Wesley," says Dr. Rigg, "had escaped from the pleasing snare, and, with stately but tender courtesy, in a final letter bowed the charmer out of his circle."

Lady Huntingdon, whom we also find pounding at the door of the House of Lords, was soon called to assert the



HORACE WALPOLE.
Fourth Earl of Orford.

rights of woman in a nobler fashion and yet higher sphere; for the political world of the day, in which she took such deep interest, sadly needed the salt of applied Christianity to save it from utter putrefaction. She was to take part in a great moral reformation, which was to change the spirit of politics and prepare the way for the safe enfranchisement of the English democracy in the succeeding century. Her fashionable friend Horace Wal-

pole was soon to dub her "Queen of the Methodists," and of her Macaulay was afterward to write, more seriously, "At Rome the Countess of Huntingdon would have a place in the calendar as Saint Selina."

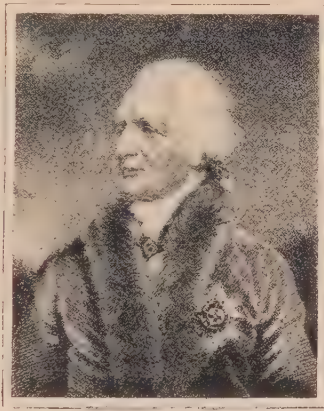
Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, was a daughter of the Earl of Ferrers, and was born four years after Wesley, August 24, 1707. She was of royal lineage. In her twenty-first year she married the ninth Earl of Huntingdon, and lived at Donnington Park, the ancestral seat, in Leicestershire. Thoughts of the reality and nearness of the unseen world were awakened when she was nine years old by seeing the funeral of a child of her own age. Her sister-in-law, Lady Margaret Hastings, was converted under the preaching

of Mr. Ingham, a friend of the Wesleys. One day she told Lady Huntingdon, with a glowing face, "Since I have known and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation I have been as happy as an angel."

A serious illness gave Lady Huntingdon time for thought. She had been generous to the poor, and anxious to do good works. This impulse became a living principle when she cast herself wholly upon Christ for salvation. The joy of a



SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.
First Earl of Orford.



A. H. FITZROY.
Duke of Grafton.

TWO ARISTOCRATIC HEARERS OF LADY HUNTINGDON.

conscious forgiveness gave her a foretaste of heaven. On her recovery she sent a message to the Wesleys, who were then preaching in the neighborhood, assuring them of her sympathy with their work and of her purpose to live for Christ. Accompanied by her husband, who did not share all her religious convictions, which he, nevertheless, respected, she attended the meetings of the Fetter Lane society and became also a constant hearer of Whitefield. When Wesley withdrew from Fetter Lane she went with him to the Foun-

dry. Although she sided with Whitefield in the Calvinistic controversy, she was largely instrumental in bringing about the reconciliation of the leaders, and became a devoted friend of Mrs. Charles Wesley.

It required much moral courage to face the prejudices and ridicule of her class, but it is to the credit of the nobility that they learned to respect Lady Huntingdon's character and motives, though only a few followed her example. She succeeded in persuading the most distinguished men and women of her day to meet in her drawing-room at Chelsea, or her chapel at Bath, or in Whitefield's Tabernacle itself, to hear her favorite preachers. The lists of illustrious persons given by her biographers make some pages look like a court directory! Some of their replies to Lady Huntingdon's invitations are curious revelations of character and of the hollowness of the fashionable world.

It has been said that Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough (Sarah Jennings), in the day of her power at court swayed the destinies of Europe with as much effect as did her husband by his exploits in war. The proud, witty, and once beautiful woman writes accepting an invitation to hear Whitefield, and says: "God knows we all need mending, and none more than myself. I have lived to see great changes in the world, have acted a conspicuous part myself, and now hope in my old days to obtain mercy from God, as I never expect any at the hands of my fellow-creatures. The Duchess of Ancaster, Lady Townsend, and Lady Cobham were exceedingly pleased with Mr. Whitefield's sermon at St. Sepulcher's Church, which has made me lament ever since that I did not hear it, as it might have been the means of doing me some good; for good, alas! I do want, but where among the corrupt sons and daughters of Adam am I to find it? . . . I have no com-

fort in my own family; . . . in truth, I always feel more happy and more contented after an hour's conversation with you than I do after a whole week's round of amusements.



DRAWN BY WARREN B. DAVIS.

FROM THE PORTRAIT BY SIR GODFREY KNELLER.

SARAH, DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

One of the great ladies who came to
hear Whitefield.

When alone my reflections almost kill me, and I am forced to fly to the society of those I detest and abhor. Now, there is Lady Frances Sanderson's rout to-morrow night. All the world will be there! I must go. I do hate that woman as much as I hate a physician. But I must go, if for no other

purpose than to mortify and spite her. This is very wicked, I know, but I confess all my little peccadilloes to you."

Another typical lady of the court was the Duchess of



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS. FROM THE PORTRAIT BY BROMPTON

WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM.

Buckingham, who lived in Buckingham Palace. Her letter is also a self-revelation: "I thank your ladyship for the information concerning the Methodist preachers. Their doctrines are most repulsive, in perpetually endeavoring to level all ranks and do away with all distinctions. It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl on the earth.

This is highly offensive and insulting, and I cannot but wonder that your ladyship should relish any sentiment so much at variance with high birth and good breeding."

Another letter of a very different character reveals a deeper work. Lady Hinchinbroke, mother of the famous fourth Earl of Sandwich, writes to Lady Huntingdon: "I stand in need of all your sympathy and all your unwearied exertions, for I feel myself utterly helpless, miserable, and guilty in the sight of heaven; and were it not for the ray of hope which I have in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, would be driven to despair and ruin. Have you heard where Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley are to preach this week?"

Horace Walpole, who heard Wesley preach in Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Bath, tells us that in 1766 it was quite the

rage among persons in high life to form parties to hear the Methodist preachers. The witty Lady Betty Cobbe, a relative of the Archbishop of Dublin, brought bishops to the chapel, whom she always contrived to smuggle into the curtained seats near the door, where they might hear without the disgrace of being seen! This seat Lady Betty facetiously termed "Nicodemus's Corner." It reminds us of the gallery at West Street Chapel, which we have already described.

Horace Walpole wrote scoffingly to Sir Horace Mann, in 1749: "Methodism is more fashionable than anything but brag; the women play very deep at both. . . . If gracious Anne were alive, she would make an admirable defendress of the new faith and build fifty more churches for female proselytes."

But some of the ablest among the hearers were the most impressed. David Hume and David Garrick did not ridicule Whitefield's preaching, as we shall see hereafter. Lord Bolingbroke wrote to the Earl of Marchmont: "I hope you heard from me . . . as well as of me by Mr. Whitefield. This apostolical person preached some time ago at Lady Huntingdon's, and I should have been curious to hear him. Nothing kept me from going but an imagination that there was to be a select auditory. That saint, our friend Chesterfield, was there, and I heard from him an extreme good account of the sermon." Lord Bolingbroke afterward did hear Whitefield,



FROM AN OLD PRINT.

LORD BOLINGBROKE.

and wrote to Lady Huntingdon offering to employ his pen in her service. We do not hear that this new defender of the faith did so employ his pen, and perhaps few acquainted with his character will regret this. Both he and Chesterfield disliked the regular clergy, whom they were glad to annoy in any way they could, and this may have had something to do with their patronage of the Methodists. But, as Canon Overton points out, this could not be said of others. The Earl

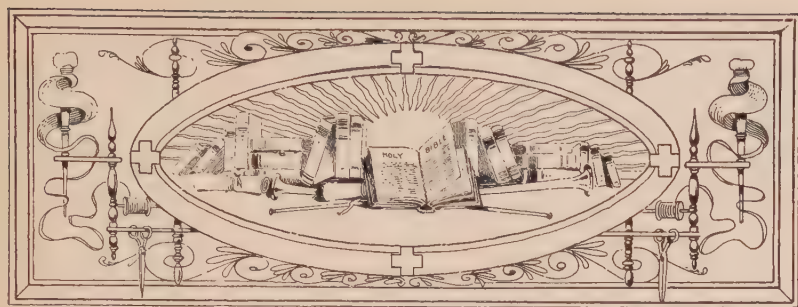


FROM AN OLD PRINT

GEORGE, LORD LYTTLETON.

of Bath, for instance, sent a donation of £50 to Lady Huntingdon for the Bristol Tabernacle, with the following note: "Mocked and reviled as Mr. Whitefield is (1749) by all ranks of society, still I contend that the day will come when England will be just, and own his greatness as a reformer and his goodness as a minister of the Most High God."

There is evidence that even in the corrupt court of the second George it was felt that Lady Huntingdon had chosen the better part. One day at court, we are told, the Prince of Wales inquired where Lady Huntingdon was, that she so seldom visited the circle now. Lady Charlotte Edwin replied with a sneer, "I suppose praying with her beggars." The prince shook his head and said, "Lady Charlotte, when I am dying I think I shall be happy to seize the skirt of Lady Huntingdon's mantle to lift me up with her to heaven." Later we shall find her at court, conversing with King George III.



CHAPTER LXIX

The Countess, the King, and the Bishops

THE SORROWS OF LADY HUNTINGDON.—HER TENDERNESS AND STRENGTH.
—“MAKE BISHOPS OF THEM.”—THE COUNTESS’S CONNECTION.—
TREVCCA COLLEGE.

PERSONAL sorrow enriched Lady Huntingdon with skill and sympathy for her remarkable ministry. Two sons died of smallpox, in the same year, at the ages of fourteen and eleven, and three years later (1746) their father died, leaving the countess with the care of two sons and two daughters. In 1763 she lost her youngest daughter, Lady Selina Hastings, “her altogether lovely” child. The mother’s narration of the event is very touching, and we give a facsimile of a portion of her letter on the subject written to Charles Wesley. Only one of her children survived Lady Huntingdon—her eldest daughter, the Countess of Moira. Before her marriage this young lady had been appointed lady of the bedchamber to the Princesses Amelia and Caroline, sisters of George III, a distinction which she held for a few months only. Her reason for resigning it was, probably enough, that given by Horace Walpole when he says, “The Queen of the Methodists got her daughter named for lady of the bedchamber to the princesses, but it is all off again, as

I should not fear you and only shew to take
from the May 12 17 63 at 3 o'clock after you in
the morning my dearest my altogether since that
my daughter Mary claims standing the school of my
eyes and continue pleasure of my heart apart
the time taken 2 1/2 of a year which last winter
till the 17 day from the time it began on her going
to bed she said she should never ride from it more
and then her whole sleep continued troubled of the
school her love by all which due to her. She said
she did not begin to think about it then and said
she has no desire to live, therefore my dear
mother my dear dear, the Lord can make me ready
for himself in a moment and if I live longer I may
not be better, I am a poor creature I can go nothing
myself & only hope you will be supported she said
me to read often by her and with great patience
recompared me. At one time she called me and said
my dearest mother come and stay down by her and
let my heart be laid down to my own of then I shall
get help. She often talked on the Lord seems to have
many and complacency of her in patience the Lord
and heard her complaints but her lips the her vision
was great. I wish she was blessed with patience she
said & was with some tears. In the four last days
there shewance at times comes from her. P. 10

Teach me, Jesus teach me, cleanse me and purify
me. Lying quiet she said & angels was looking
her and she shut as but then with her eyes up the
father. Another time she said I am not happy
as my heart can desire to be the day before her
death I come to her and asked her why she knew
me she said my dear mother I then told her of
her heart and happy. She said I was understood
I am happy very, very happy and then put her
lips to kiss me. She dried her short & said
I know how long how the Lord has been here
I should my heart she said she had her heart in school
shook her dear mother to tell her, she often said
be resigned to go with all and that she has no
hope of salvation but in the mercy of Jesus Christ
Amen

LADY HUNTINGDON'S LETTER TO CHARLES WESLEY ON HER
DAUGHTER'S DEATH.

she will not let her play at cards on Sundays." Lady Moira was a woman of distinguished talents and a great patroness of literature. She lived to old age, and Lady Huntingdon's biographer received from her many interesting particulars regarding her mother, whose memory she held in the highest veneration. Lady Huntingdon's youngest son died at Brighton, in 1757, at the age of eighteen. Her eldest son, the Earl of Huntingdon, died in 1789. He had imbibed skeptical sentiments from Lords Chesterfield and Bolingbroke, the former of whom acted as a second father to' him. This was a bitter trial to his mother, whom, however, he always treated with kindness and respect.

When Mrs. Charles Wesley was stricken with smallpox at Bristol, in 1753, the countess put off a visit to her son and hastened to nurse her through the dangerous illness. John Wesley was ill in London at the same time, and not expected to recover, and her affection for her old friend is expressed in a letter to Charles: "The hearing of his danger has affected me very much, as I find that charity that never fails abides by my heart for him. I do grieve to think his faithful labors are to cease here on earth. How does an hour of loving sorrow swallow up the *just* differences our various judgments make, and loses all things; but what an eternity of love must produce to reconcile that ignorance our wretched condition here below miserably allots for us! I have loved him these five and thirty years, and it is with pleasure I find he remains in my heart as a friend and a laborious and beloved servant of Jesus Christ. I will hope yet the Lord may spare him." John Wesley was spared for thirty-eight years of further service.

Of some of her letters recently brought to light a Wesleyan writer said: "Taken almost at random, they picture this

prophetess of the last century—a woman of royal descent, moving in the highest circles of court life—the center of a great and sometimes furious theological controversy, a leader



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

FROM A WOODCUT.

LADY HUNTINGDON'S CHAPEL IN SPA FIELDS.

in one wing of a new reformation, with affairs and momentous interests pressing heavily upon her; and yet, all the while, she is so purely womanly in her sympathies and in her daily habits that we love the motherly, fearless, tender-hearted woman even more than we admire the splendid leader in a

great evangelism. She is rich in human kindness, never hiding herself from her own flesh, and never unmindful, amid great public business, of the paramount claims of kinship and friendship. She is a brave woman, and as fearless in moments of danger as John Wesley himself. One of the letters was dictated, as she herself tells us; the countess had been in the wars and was unable to write with her own hand. She has been fasting with the society, and visiting an orphan girl for whose soul she had been fighting valiantly. 'As God and not as the devil would have it, I was sent again to stand in the gap.' We can see her, with the spirit of faith upon her, 'setting Satan and all his agents at defiance,' praying in confidence until the young girl recovers the sight of Jesus her Saviour. And then, having committed her young friend to the safe keeping of 'a faithful daughter of Abraham,' the fearless countess goes on her way 'rejoicing, and treading upon serpents and scorpions.'

"'Ye malishous spirit was highly provok'd. I had warn-
ing of it. When one who had ofishously got me a Coach
urg'd me to go into it, we had scarce set out when ye Coach-
man, I fear desiningly, overturn'd it down a very Steep Bank.
I found ye Coach going, but my heart was as firm as a Rock.
A young woman whos Eye was wounded Joynd with me in
"Prais' God from whom all blessings flow," etc. Ye two
others were nither hurt nor frightened. I did not persive at
first yt I had got any harm till in walking home my arm
pained me. Cal'd at a friend's and had it bath'd in rum,
then hastened to ye house where I had left my Poor orphan.
Found my Pleuretick pain return. Rejoyced greatly for ye
grace which God had givener [*sic*] her. Spent an hour or
two in much pain and peace. When I came home my sur-
geon (yt is my mother) was afraid some of ye smaler bones

had been broak, but in ye mōrning I c^d move and make some little use of my fingers. As soon as I rose, I got out (contrary to my surgeon's orders) to look after my Ward; whom I safely lodged in ye Bexley Coach, with a L^r of recommendation to my good friend Mr. Piers.'” This letter in its perfect naturalness gives us a glimpse of the woman in all her unconventional reality. We can even imagine the vigor of her speech, and can hear her merry laughter and feel the magnetic charm of her personality.

Lady Huntingdon was as strong as she was tender-hearted. Bishop Benson, at one time tutor to her husband, was called in to restore her to “a saner mind.” Somewhat disturbed by his failure to do this, he remarked that George Whitefield was the author of her errors, and he regretted having ordained him. “My lord,” said the countess, “mark my words: when you are on your dying bed that will be one of the few ordinations upon which you will reflect with pleasure.” And so it proved. When the bishop was dying he sent Whitefield ten guineas for his orphanage and asked an interest in his prayers.

Most of the ecclesiastics of the day were much more troubled about Methodism than they were about the wild gayety of their archbishop's palace at Lambeth. Lady Huntingdon was scandalized by the convivial routs and balls which took place there, the magnificent recklessness of which eclipsed all other entertainments. She remonstrated in vain with Archbishop Cornwallis himself. He ridiculed her, and asked, “Who made you a regulator of morals?” Nothing daunted, she sought an audience with the king, accompanied by Lady Ancaster and Lord Dartmouth. George III received her with respect, promised to secure reforms at Lambeth, and in the conversation that followed

remarked to her: "I have been told so many odd stories of your ladyship that I am free to confess I felt a great deal of curiosity to see if you were at all like other women; and I am happy at having the opportunity of assuring your ladyship of the very good opinion I have of you, and how very highly I estimate your character, your zeal, and abilities, which cannot be consecrated to a more noble purpose."

The king then referred to her ministers, of whose eloquence he had heard. He understood that the bishops were jealous of them, and related a conversation he had lately had with a prelate. He had complained to the king of some of the preachers who had created a sensation in his diocese; and his majesty replied, "Make bishops of them; make bishops of them!" "That might be done," replied the prelate; "but, please your majesty, we cannot make a bishop of Lady Huntingdon." The queen replied, "It would be a lucky circumstance if you could, for she puts you all to shame." "Well," said the king, "see if you cannot imitate the zeal of these men." His lordship made some reply which displeased the king, who exclaimed with great animation, "I wish there was a Lady Huntingdon in every diocese in the kingdom!"

After the countess had retired the king told Lord Dartmouth that, "with all the enthusiasm ascribed to her," she was "an honor to her sex and nation." A few days later the king wrote a sharp letter to the archbishop desiring him to desist from his unseemly routs.

Lady Huntingdon's personal character deserved and won the deepest respect. An Anglican writer has well said that the moral courage which enabled a lady, brought up among all the traditions of an aristocracy such as the aristocracy was in the reigns of George II and George III, to cast aside all

the prejudices of her order, and brave all the contempt and ridicule of those with whom she would naturally be most brought into contact, and cast in her lot openly and without reserve with the despised Methodists, is admirable. If she seems at times to adopt a somewhat imperious air toward her protégés, we must remember that a countess was a countess in those days, and that she was certainly encouraged in the line she took by the extravagant homage paid to her by Whitefield and others. John Wesley, indeed, was never dazzled by her grandeur; on the contrary, he took upon him more than once to rebuke the imperiousness of "that valuable woman." Berridge, of Everton, rebelled in his own laughing way against her authority; and there is not the slightest trace of undue subserviency in the clergy, like Romaine and Henry Venn and others, who acted with rather than under her. But the majority of those who were connected with her could not fail to be dazzled by the honor of the connection; and not only submitted to, but courted, the authority which she was not slack in assuming over them.

But she used that authority for the highest purposes. She was as far removed as John Wesley from any love of power for power's sake. She devoted her fortune to her new work. The sale of her jewels contributed to the building of a chapel at Brighton. She erected or purchased buildings in many places, appointing ministers as she thought fit—revoking such appointments at her pleasure. The united congregations were called "Lady Huntingdon's Connection." Over the affairs of this connection she ruled with much tact until her death, appointing committees of laymen to superintend secular business.

There was a great stir at the universities in 1767. A little band of Methodists had been formed at Cambridge under

Rowland Hill. At Oxford, Halward, of Worcester College, formed an evangelical "Holy Club," with the result that six students of St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford, were expelled, after due trial, "for holding Methodist tenets, and taking upon them to pray, read, and expound the Scriptures in private houses." The Oxford authorities as well as the public journals accused Lady Huntingdon of "seducing young men from their respective trades and avocations and sending them to the university, where they were maintained at her expense, that they might afterward skulk." Dr. Dixon, principal of St. Edmund's, moved for the acquittal of the students, basing his defense on the Thirty-nine Articles and the unblemished character of the young men. Horne, afterward Bishop of Norwich, also defended them. Sir Richard Hill and others wrote pungent pamphlets, remarking sarcastically that "to swear extempore brought an Oxford student into no trouble, but to pray extempore was apparently an offense not to be borne!" Whitefield appealed to the chancellor, but it was all in vain.

The resolute countess had already consulted Wesley about a scheme for the education of preachers, and she decided at once to build a college of her own.

On the site of an old castle in South Wales she built Trevecca College. It was opened in 1768. John Fletcher, of Madeley, was president, and Joseph Benson was head master, until the Calvinistic sympathies of the countess led to their retirement. She resided at the college for many months in the year, and "stationed" the students; some going to Ireland, others to America, but the greater number supplying her chapels in Great Britain.

The first of these students was a working man. Fletcher tells us that in a dream there appeared to him a young man,

“James Glazebrook, collier and getter-out of ironstone in the woods of Madeley,” a student with whom to begin “the



TREVECCA FARMHOUSE.

Here John Wesley, John Fletcher, and George Whitefield stayed when they went to open Trevecca College, 1768.

TREVECCA COLLEGE.

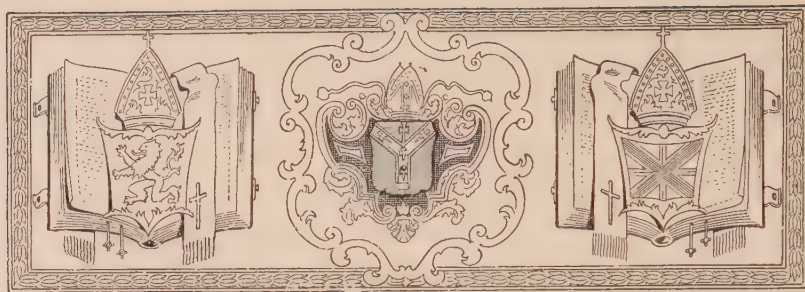
Opened by Lady Huntingdon, 1768, now controlled by the Calvinistic Methodists.

School of the Prophets.” “To my great surprise,” wrote Fletcher, “he came into Madeley the next morning. I found, upon inquiry, that he was as much drawn to come as I to

speak of him." He was afterward ordained as an evangelical clergyman.

Wesley and Fletcher, with other evangelical clergymen—Venn and Romaine, of whom we must soon give account—were consulted as to the course of study in the college. It was meager enough, but "at the same time," says Marsden, an Anglican historian, "it was much better than that of either of the universities." An interesting letter of Fletcher's (1758) says that grammar, logic, rhetoric, ecclesiastical history, a little natural philosophy and geography, with a great deal of practical divinity, will be sufficient for those who do not care to dive into languages. Watts's *Logic*, Wesley's *Natural Philosophy*, and other treatises, and for Latin and Greek, Cole, Schrevelius, and Pasore, sufficed at first.

With the later history of the college and the "connection" we must deal when we record Lady Huntingdon's death.



CHAPTER LXX

Evangelical Pioneers among the Clergy

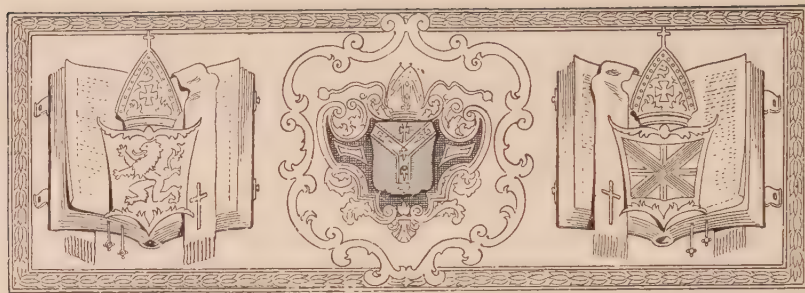
THE VANGUARD OF EVANGELICALISM.—THE FIRST CORNISH METHODIST CLERGYMAN.—THE WRATH OF BISHOP LAVINGTON.—WALKER, OF TRURO.—THE MEDITATIVE HERVEY.

WE have already met with a number of clergymen who were associated with the Wesleys, Whitefield, and Lady Huntingdon in the work of the great revival. Some of these gave up parochial work in the Church of England and became itinerant preachers like Whitefield. Others continued in their livings and parishes and were at the same time Methodist assistants (superintendents) and had a Methodist circuit extending far beyond their own parishes, like Grimshaw, of Haworth. A third class attended the Conferences, welcomed the Methodist leaders to their homes and pulpits, and assisted them in the administration of the sacraments, without leaving or extending their parochial work, like Perronet, of Shoreham. And at a later period, as Methodism crystallized into churches separated from the State Establishment, a more or less distinct section was formed of clergymen who held Methodist doctrines, but anxiously repudiated the name of Methodist in their dread of separation from the State Church. It is easy to label these last “evan-

gelicals" as distinguished from the first class, who were undoubtedly "Methodists." The second and third groups cannot so easily be classified. In the eighteenth century all four types were called Methodists, whether they wished it or no, and it is amusing to witness the feverish anxiety of a few sincerely pious and highly respectable evangelicals of the later period in their vigorous attempts to shake off the term Methodist which rude folk flung at them, and which stuck to them like a burr. And so it came to pass that, while all Methodists were willing to be called evangelicals, all evangelicals were not willing to be called Methodists.

Of the distinctly evangelical clergy within the Anglican Church whose spiritual genealogy may be traced back to Methodism, and especially to Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon, we must give some account later. But among those who became associated with the Methodist leaders there were some who did not owe their spiritual awakening to Methodism, but whose zeal was kindled by sparks from the heavenly fires which burned almost simultaneously in America, Scotland, Wales, and England. As we have seen, Howell Harris, the lay apostle of Wales, was one of these Methodists before Methodism, and Parson Thompson, of Cornwall, was a clergyman of the same type.

The Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, himself a Cornishman, has rescued the name of Parson George Thompson from oblivion, and has described him as "the first Cornish Methodist." He left Oxford before the influence of the Wesleys had been felt there, and became a curate in 1722. Just before he was presented with the living of St. Gennys, in one of the most out-of-the-way spots in Cornwall, his whole purpose in life was changed by a startling dream of the judgment. Soon the little world around him was agape with wonder at his earnest



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preaching. He wrote a fervent letter to Dr. Watts, entreating a place in his prayers, and sent an account of his conversion to Dr. Doddridge.

His preaching bore good fruit, not only among the people,



DRAWN BY WARREN E. DAVIS.

ST. GENNYS CHURCH.

"Midway between Bude and Boss, perched almost on the edge of the thundering coast, stands the little church and a single farmhouse. Here lived and preached the first of Cornish Methodists, Parson Thompson."

but even amongst the clergy. Not far from St. Gennys lived the Rev. John Bennet, over seventy years of age and curate of no fewer than four parishes, of which two were twelve miles apart. He was led to the knowledge of salvation by Mr. Thompson, caught the fire of his spiritual father, and shared with him alike his earnest work and the episcopal censure that followed.

One afternoon Mr. Thompson preached at Fremington, the parish in which his Brynsworthy estate lay. As soon as the

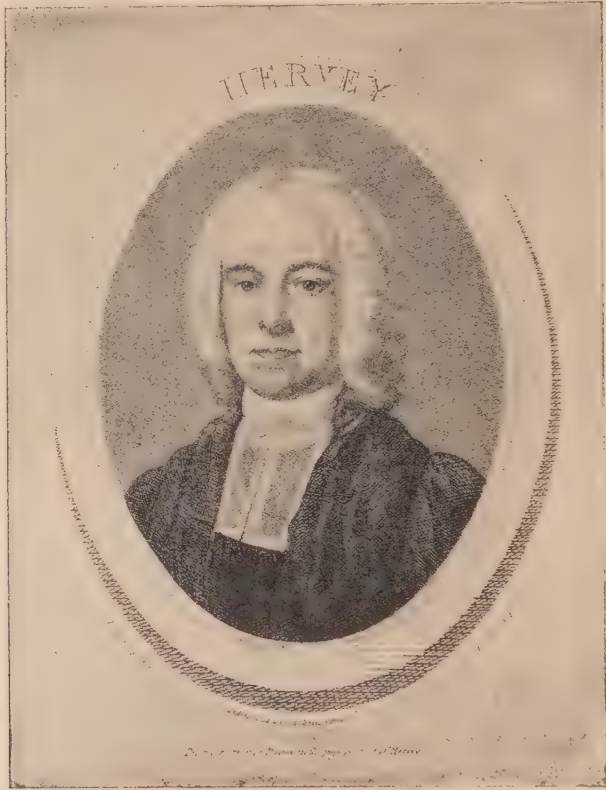
benediction was pronounced, up rose a young man in his pew and startled the congregation by asking them to remain for a few moments. With tears filling his eyes and a voice choking with emotion he told them that under the word of the preacher that day he had believed with his heart unto righteousness, and he urged upon them all the same great salvation. It was Charles Hill, the son of the resident vicar. He became rector of Tavistock, in North Devon, and died in 1801, leaving behind him a blessed memory and much good fruit.

Then Mr. Thompson made the acquaintance of one of the Oxford Methodists, James Hervey, and their hearts were knit together in a lasting friendship. Now the name of the Wesleys and their work would become known to the vicar and their coming be eagerly looked for. One result, definite and tangible, of that friendship endures to this day; for it was as Hervey was riding into Cornwall to visit his friend at St. Gennys that he turned aside into the church at Kilkhampton, and there, whilst musing on the monuments of the Grenvilles, found the suggestions that led to his *Meditations Among the Tombs*; and to Mr. Thompson's daughter he dedicated the celebrated book.

In 1743 came Whitefield, and soon after the Wesleys. Mr. Thompson greeted them with characteristic warmth and energy, going with them from place to place through the county. Whitefield was the first to preach at St. Gennys. There, on a bleak November Sunday, whilst the winter winds swept and howled around the little church, the great preacher held the congregation under the spell of his power and closed the service with the people in tears, the vicar meanwhile going from pew to pew to comfort the wounded souls.

During a visit of Charles Wesley a singular incident oc-

curred in one of Mr. Bennet's churches, probably Laneast. As Wesley denounced the drunken revels of the times, some one of the congregation, a rude and half-drunken fellow,



FROM A COPPERPLATE ENGRAVING.

REV. JAMES HERVEY.

“contradicted and blasphemed.” The preacher turns upon him sternly: “Who is he that pleads for the devil?” But the disturber, noways abashed, lifts up a brazen face and answers roundly, “I am he that pleads for the devil.” Whereupon the preacher, roused to a holy fierceness, takes occasion “to show the revelers their champion,” and drives

him, confused and frightened, out of the place. Then the preacher goes on to cry out against so-called "harmless diversions:" "I was by them kept dead to God, asleep in the devil's arms, secure in a state of damnation, for eighteen years," he cried fervently. At once, from the midst of the clergymen, comes a sudden and irregular response: "And I for twenty-five," cries Mr. Meriton, a traveling companion of Mr. Wesley. Then out rolls the earnest voice of Parson Thompson, "And I for thirty-five." The interruption ends with the tremulous voice of the aged curate, moving every heart, as with lowliness and grief he adds, "And I for above seventy."

The friendship of the vicar with the Wesleys and their preachers, so publicly avowed, exposed him to the noisy censure of the other clerics. A report reached Hervey that Parson Thompson was summoned to Exeter to appear before Bishop Clagget, there "to give an account of his behavior and zeal"—a thing so intolerably offensive in religion—"and that all the pulpits are shut against him." Lavington, Clagget's successor in the bishopric, was not likely to suffer so prominent a Methodist to go unrebuked. His rage against the Wesleys swept over all the bounds of courtesy, and even decency, and led to virulent attacks upon them. Lavington had some reason, certainly, for being annoyed. As soon as he had given his first episcopal charge to the clergy a manuscript was circulated professing to be a copy of the bishop's address. In it his lordship was represented as a friend and admirer of the Wesleys, and was made to talk as if he were full of all the earnest spirituality of an ardent Methodist. This pretended charge was printed, and the fashionable world was horrified to find that a bishop, and such a bishop, had fallen thus; had actually joined himself to this vulgar people! Lav-

ington was beside himself with rage, and charged Whitefield and the Wesleys with being the authors of the pretended address. Through the influence of the Countess of Huntingdon he was compelled to withdraw this charge, but the hatred remained; and of the many bitter antagonists to the Methodist leaders and their work one of the fiercest and most unscrupulous, for a time at least, was this Right Reverend Father in God, Bishop Lavington.

From such a man good Parson Thompson could expect no quarter. On July 24, 1749, the new bishop, in the course of his primary visitation, reached Launceston. The Vicar of St. Gennys is charged with having preached outside his parish and in unlicensed places. To that the vicar, without further ado, pleads guilty, and is admonished to confine his preaching henceforth to his own church, under threat of pains and penalties. Whitefield, who came westward a few days after, preserves a much more lively scene, in which the angry bishop was met with a spirit and courage such as he had not expected. His lordship had threatened fiercely that he would strip off the vicar's gown if he had more dealings with this people. Whereupon the sturdy parson sprang up and took it off himself, and flung it at the bishop's feet, telling him that he could preach the Gospel without that as well as with it; and so away. Whereupon his lordship, finding what manner of man he had to do with, sent to fetch him back, and henceforth dealt with him more gently.

In 1782 John Wesley visited his old friend, who was near death, and administered the Lord's Supper to him; leaving him "calmly waiting till his change should come."

Another Cornish evangelical was Samuel Walker, curate of Truro. He was at Exeter College, Oxford, when the Holy Club was meeting, but there is no evidence that he came un-

der its influence. He entered Truro in 1746 as a dancing, card-playing, party-going clergyman, only ambitious "to be courted for his gayety and admired for his eloquence." He was converted through the conversation of Mr. Conan, master of the grammar school. Then came a mighty change in his preaching. He was a dignified and handsome man, tall in stature and courtly in manner. His new experience added impressiveness to his bearing. The fashionable folk of Truro begged the rector to dismiss the Methodistic curate, whose very presence was such a rebuke to Sabbath loiterers that they would say, "Let us go; here comes Walker." The rector waited on the curate twice, and each time retreated without daring to mention the purpose of his errand. When entreated by a wealthy parishioner to go a third time he said, "Do you go and dismiss him if you can; I cannot. I feel in his presence as if he were a being of superior order, and I am so abashed that I am uneasy till I retire."

Wesley refers in his Journal to the societies formed by Walker, and it was to this good clergyman he wrote when the question of separation from the Church of England was discussed, in 1755. Walker was strongly in favor of handing over the societies to the local clergy, and protested strongly against Wesley's "irregularities." He was devoted to the parochial system; which in his hands was a success, but which, in Wesley's opinion, did not meet the special need of all England. He doubted the wisdom of employing unordained preachers, and foresaw the coming separation.

Five years after this correspondence Wesley writes: "I had the pleasure of spending a little time with that venerable man, Mr. Walker, of Truro. I fear his physicians do not understand his case. If he recovers, it must be through an Almighty Physician." A year later, 1761, he died, leaving be-

hind him a name fragrant to this day, and hundreds of living witnesses to the power of his preaching. Such crowds attended his ministry that it was said, "You might fire a cannon down every street in Truro, in church time, without a chance of killing a single human being." After his death a large portion of his hearers formed a congregation under Lady Huntingdon's preachers, and became a Dissenting

Church. They converted into a chapel a building which had been used for fifty years as a cockpit, and from this center, under the personal direction of the countess, her connection spread throughout the West of England.

James Hervey joined with Walker in expositulating with Wesley

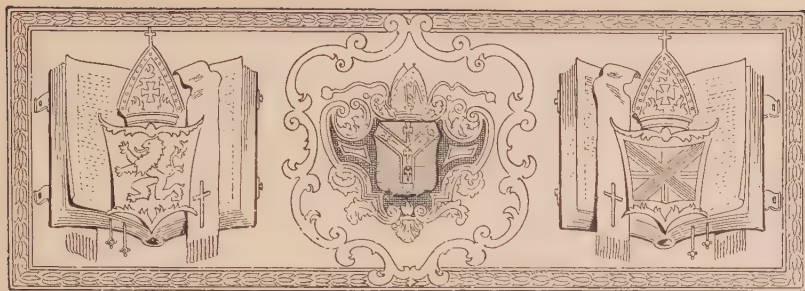


DRAWN BY W. B. PRICE.

JAMES HERVEY'S CHURCH.

At Weston-Favel.

on his "irregularities." Hervey was an ideal country parson. He must not be judged by his florid style or his Calvinistic dialogues. Personally he was simple in his habits and sweet in temper. Strangely enough, he consulted Wesley about his literary work—of all men in the world! Wesley, who never used two words where one would suffice, and who said, "I dare no more write in a fine style than wear a fine coat." He did not take Wesley's advice, for his style is superfine. Nevertheless, he was a saintly man, living a life of self-denial and charity at Weston-Favel, in Northamptonshire, where he died in 1758.



CHAPTER LXXI

Grimshaw, of Haworth, the Village of the Brontës

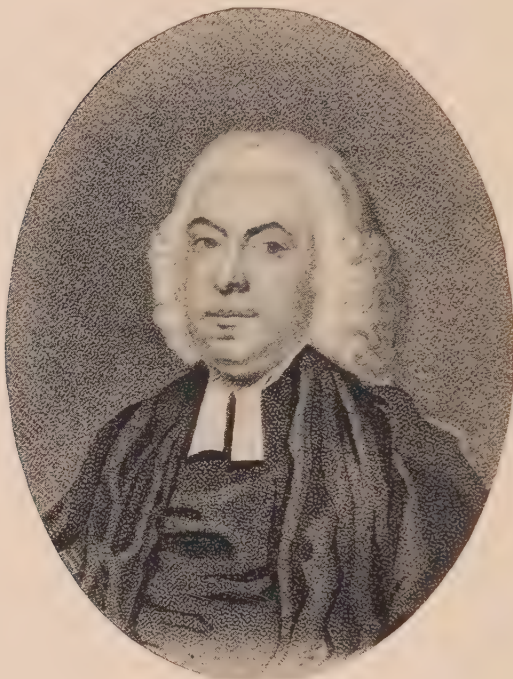
A LITERARY SHRINE.—“MAD GRIMSHAW.”—THE WESLEYS AND WHITEFIELD AT HAWORTH.—A NOBLE HUMORIST.—THE ARCHBISHOP’S VERDICT.—THE BRONTËS.

JOHN NEWTON compares Haworth to those obscure places in Galilee which “owe all their celebrity to the Gospel.” Grimshaw’s more brilliant biographer, Spence Hardy, remarks that it is evident that Newton was no prophet, as Haworth, since the death of the Brontë sisters, has become one of the most famous literary shrines of England.

The village lies imbedded in the moor four miles from Keighley, between the Counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire. “Long, narrow, substantially built with brownstone, its appearance is in excellent keeping with the bold character of the surrounding scenery. There is one extended street, paved with wrought stones, on which the wooden clogs of the children, rimmed with iron, fall with startling noise as the wild young northerns come to gaze upon the stranger. The street rises with a steepness that in some places would be supposed to render the higher parts of the village inaccessible to wheeled carriages. Indeed, the neighbor villagers have a legend—such as the country folk of rival localities

love to tell—that when the first carriage came to Haworth, not many centuries ago, the astonished people brought out grass and other provender wherewith to feed it, under the supposition that it was some strange animal.”

This wild moorland parish became the scene of William



FROM THE ENGRAVING BY THOMSON.

REV. WILLIAM GRIMSHAW, B.A.,

Rector of Haworth, Yorkshire.

Grimshaw's labors in 1742. He had fallen into evil company at Christ College, Cambridge, but after he was severed from his boon companions he ceased to drink to excess and swear. The death of his first wife when he was curate of Todmorden brought him great grief and the terrors of an awakened conscience. The reading of Owen on Justification brought him light

and “a taste of the pardoning love of God.” At this time he was an entire stranger to the Methodists.

When it was rumored that John Nelson, the Methodist mason, was coming to Haworth, Grimshaw charged his people not to go to hear him, as he understood that wherever the Methodists went they turned everything upside

down. An old woman, who ventured to hear the stone mason at an old building called the hall, was surprised at the text he chose, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." She was soon able to rejoice in God her Saviour. Grimshaw himself, on Sunday, September 2, 1744, had a "wonderful manifestation" which prepared the way for the great change that was coming. He was seized with giddiness whilst reading morning prayers, and was helped out of church to the clerk's house, exhorting the people as he passed along the aisles to flee to Christ. He fell into a trance, in which he seemed to see Christ pleading for him. The prints of the nails, as though newly made, filled him with a joyful confidence. He rose up quite restored and extended the afternoon service from two to seven o'clock.

Soon after, William Darney, a Scotchman, preached near Haworth, and Grimshaw, who went to refute him, was staggered to find the layman basing his teachings on the Scriptures, Liturgy, and Articles. He conversed with Darney secretly in a stone quarry near the parsonage, fearful of every dog's bark, and saying, "Hush! there is somebody coming." Soon we find him helping Darney, and the countryside saying, "Mad Grimshaw is turned Scotch Will's clerk; and Scotch Will guides and leads mad Grimshaw."

But it was soon evident that there was method in his madness. Over the moors he sped often, having "in succession the crag for his pulpit, the glen for his oratory, the market place for his church, and the roused rabble for his auditors." He established two "rounds," to which he gave his week days, and formed societies, with a leader for each class.

In 1746 Charles Wesley visited Haworth, where he found Grimshaw and his second wife lying ill with fever. He came

again three months later, but the incumbent was afraid to let him preach in the church, though Charles told him that there was no law either of God or man to hinder him from occupying the pulpit. In May, 1747, however, when John Wesley came to the place, he was allowed to preach in the church. A warm friendship sprang up between the two men. Grimshaw's children were educated in Wes-



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

HAWORTH CHURCH AND RECTORY.

ley's School at Kingswood, and much happy correspondence and cooperation cemented the friendship between the two evangelists. Grimshaw's manly words to the Countess of Huntingdon's son impressed that skeptical young nobleman more than all the arguments about religion he had held with others.

Haworth soon became a Methodist center in the north. In September, 1749, Whitefield preached three times there. He

had a congregation of six thousand in the churchyard, and one thousand took the Lord's Supper. Once, as Whitefield stood on a platform outside the church, his eye caught a listener on the top of the gray tower. "Man, I have a word for thee," he cried. This personal thrust led to the man's conversion.

Haworth had won a place among the twenty Methodist circuits in the Minutes for 1749. Grimshaw was regarded as the "assistant" or superintendent under Wesley. The preachers appointed by the Methodist Conference were known as "Grimshaw's preachers." He visited the classes quarterly, giving tickets of membership for the Methodist society. He gave all his influence to the building of a chapel in Haworth, and was a trustee of several others. Before his death we find him attending the Conference at Leeds.

There are many well-authenticated stories which illustrate Grimshaw's quaint humor, although his eccentricities have probably been exaggerated. He ruled his rough parishioners for their good. John Newton says that a friend of his was once passing a public house in Haworth on a Sunday when he saw people escaping from the windows or climbing over a wall. Grimshaw was in hot pursuit. It is said that he told the clerk to give out the 119th psalm to be sung before the sermon, and then, armed with a horsewhip, started to find those who were breaking the Sabbath. A stranger riding through the village found that the blacksmith durst not replace his horse's shoe until Grimshaw gave permission.

He rose at four in the summer, at five in winter; always singing the Doxology as soon as he was awake. Visitors looking out of the bedroom window were shocked to find the vicar cleaning his guests' boots. After family prayer he used to dismiss the company with some such saying as this: "May God bless you in your souls and in your bodies, and

in all you put your hands to this day." He sometimes gave away all his clothes save the coat and shoes he wore. He often said, "If I should die to-day, I have not a penny to leave behind me." A cup of water with a crust of bread and an onion served him for a meal when on his preaching rounds. Once, when Whitefield told his hearers at Haworth that he need not enlarge on a certain duty because the people enjoyed a faithful ministry, Grimshaw interrupted him with the words, "O, sir, for God's sake do not speak so; I pray you, do not flatter them; I fear the greater part of them are going to hell with their eyes open!" "He would rive them from horseback and make them pray," was the local description of that burning zeal which made the evangelist stop every passer-by to inquire about his soul.

Nor was he less watchful over his own failings. He felt himself getting very proud of a fine cow. She was so often in his thoughts that he determined reluctantly to part with his idol. The farmer who came to see her, with a view to purchasing, asked if she had any fault. Grimshaw answered, "Her fault will be no fault to you: she follows me into the pulpit."

"One source of Grimshaw's power in addressing the people was his ability to seize on any passing event and turn it to instructive account. He preached in the same style as that in which Albert Dürer painted. He had not the clearness of Wesley, nor the force of Whitefield, nor the wit of Berridge; but he was playful, animated, and impressive. We are reminded of Luther by his roughness, and of Latimer by his picturesque groupings and by his allusions to the manners of the times among the simple folk who composed his audience."

Of course such a work as Grimshaw's aroused the wrath of

clerical foes, who, however, found the Archbishop of York more lenient with Methodists than his fellow-prelates. Grimshaw, accused of preaching out of his own parish, was asked by the archbishop: "How many communicants had you when you first came to Haworth?" He answered, "Twelve, my lord." "How many have you now at such solemnities?" was the next question; and the reply was, "In the winter from three to four hundred; and sometimes, in the summer, near twelve hundred." On hearing this, his grace expressed his approbation, and said, "We cannot find fault with Mr. Grimshaw, as he is instrumental in bringing so many persons to the Lord's table."

This was not the only occasion on which he was cited before the metropolitan. At another time, when complaint of his ramblings was made to the archbishop, and of his intrusion into other folds, his grace announced a confirmation in Mr. Grimshaw's church and a large number of the clergy gathered. After prayers Mr. Grimshaw ascended the pulpit and commenced an extempore prayer for the archbishop, the people, and the young persons about to be confirmed, and wrestled with God for his assistance and blessing until the congregation, the clergy, and the prelate were moved to tears. After the service the clergy gathered around his grace to ascertain what proceedings he intended to adopt in order to restrain the preacher from such rash and extemporaneous expositions of the divine word. The archbishop looked around upon them with paternal benignity, and, taking Mr. Grimshaw by the hand, said, with a tremulous voice and with a faltering tongue, "I would to God that all the clergy in my diocese were like this good man!"

Mr. Grimshaw afterward observed to a party of friends, whom he had invited to take tea with him that evening, "I

did expect to be turned out of my parish on this occasion; but if I had, I would have joined my friend Wesley—taken my saddlebags and gone to one of his poorest circuits.”

In 1763 a malignant fever was raging in the parish. Grimshaw caught it, while visiting one of his people, and died on April 7, in his fifty-first year. He had been twenty years incumbent at Haworth. Henry Venn preached his funeral sermon from a text which had been chosen by Grimshaw himself: “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

John Richardson, the next incumbent, disapproved of outdoor preaching, and refused to let Fletcher occupy Whitefield’s pulpit at the outside of the church when he visited Haworth, in 1767, with Mr. Townsend and the Countess of Huntingdon. The two preachers had, therefore, to take their stand in the churchyard.

The Rev. Patrick Brontë, with his wife and six children, came to Haworth in 1820. Mrs. Brontë belonged to a Methodist family, the Bramwells, of Penzance, and it was at Woodhouse Grove School for Methodist ministers’ sons, where she was staying with her uncle, Mr. Fennell, the house governor, that she met Mr. Brontë, who was an examiner. She gave her famous daughter, Charlotte, the copy of Wesley’s edition of *à Kempis*, which her latest biographer, Mr. Shorter, looks upon with “singular interest.”

“Haworth, since the death of the authoress of *Jane Eyre*,” says Spence Hardy, “has become a place of frequent pilgrimage, and lords and ladies of high degree have come to visit her venerable parent, or to traverse the spots where she timidly rambled when seeking the imagery that aided her in writing the works by which she has fascinated so many thousands with her bold thoughts and striking incidents. Here, with her high-souled sisters and misguided brother,

she sought the wild flower when a child; and in after years, with a sad heart, but with a purpose strong as the oldest rock around her, she here communed with the unearthly world she had herself created from the scenes presented within the circle of her own vision—contracted as to its limit, but keener than the flash of the serpent's eye as to the vividness of its glance—and from the chaos of her own strange and terrible experiences."

When the Rev. Thomas Akroyd visited Mr. Brontë, in 1857, and told him that he was a Methodist minister, the aged vicar replied, much in the spirit of his famous predecessor, who cared little for controversy: "O, indeed! A Wesleyan! Well, I have a great respect for the Wesleyans. I have known several of the ministers of your denomination. Very good men they were; very good men; and names are nothing to me—I care nothing about names. If we are only fighting under the banners of Jehovah-Jesus—that's the great thing."



CHAPTER LXXII

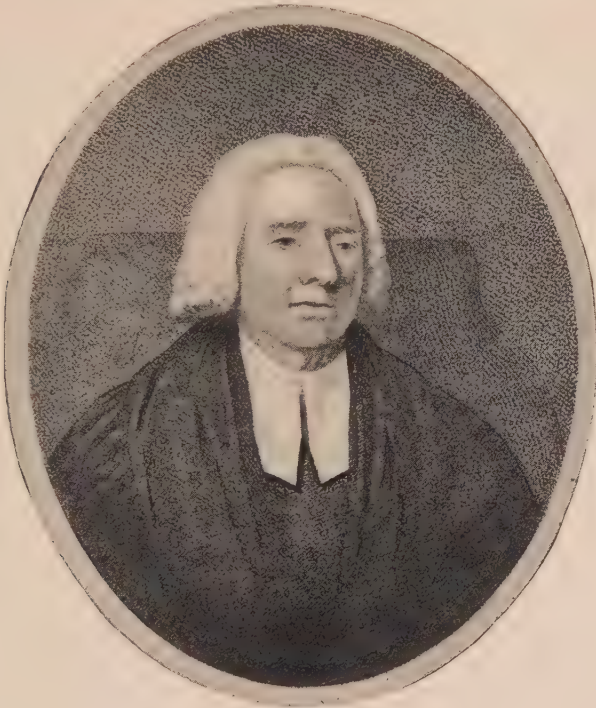
“The Archbishop of the Methodists” and the Coming “Church”

THE PERRONETS OF SHOREHAM.—“THE METHODIST CHURCH.”—THE AUTHOR OF A NOBLE HYMN.—BRAVE BENJAMIN INGHAM AND HIS SOCIETIES.

ANOTHER parochial clergyman who was a staunch ally of the Wesleys, and their chief counselor for forty years, was Vincent Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham, Kent. Charles Wesley called him “the Archbishop of the Methodists.” He had much in common with John Wesley, who was ten years his junior. Educated at Queen’s College, Oxford, he became a close student of metaphysics, and soon after he became a vicar he wrote in defense of Locke against Bishops Butler and Browne.

He had heard strange rumors of the Methodists, and received John Wesley coldly when Henry Piers, Vicar of Bexley, brought him to Shoreham in 1744, but the interview resulted in a lifelong friendship. The vicarage became a congenial home for the evangelists, and in it a room was set apart for Methodist services. Vincent Perronet probably influenced Wesleyan Methodism, as regards its ecclesiastical development, more than any other clergyman. It was to him that John Wesley addressed his Plain Account of the

People called Methodists. The coming separation he foresaw without dread. Writing to Charles Wesley in 1762, he styled the United Societies "the Methodist Church," repeating the phrase in another letter of 1763. "It is significant," says the Rev. J. S. Simon, "that his correspondent was



FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY RIDLEY.

REV. VINCENT PERRONET, M. A.

Vicar of Shoreham, Kent, "the Archbishop of the Methodists."

Charles Wesley. Vincent Perronet's breezy common sense refreshes us. While Charles was agonizing at the thought of separation, and John was proving by vehement assertions that no separation had taken place, Perronet glanced along the coming years and anticipated approaching events. He

did not fear what he apprehended; he quietly prepared the minds of the reformers for the ecclesiastical changes which were inevitable. If we could by some subtle analysis detect the constituent elements of the force which affected Wesley when, in his later years, he formally prepared his societies for a separate existence, we think that the influence of Peronnet would be clearly revealed."

We have a vivid account by Mr. Simon of Charles Wesley's introduction to Shoreham Church: "It is September 16, 1746. The church is crowded. Mr. Green reads the prayers. Then Charles Wesley ascends the pulpit and begins to preach. No sooner has he uttered a few sentences than a murmuring sound is heard. It rises to a shout. Then it swells into a roar. The church is turned into a bear garden. Men are dancing, stamping, and blaspheming. One ingenious rioter, thinking that the harmony of the proceedings might be increased, steps through a doorway and grasps the sinuous bell rope that sways at his touch. His example is followed by others; and soon, above the noise of the angry voices, thunders a cataract of sound that shakes the tower. It speaks highly for Charles Wesley's pertinacity and endurance that for half an hour he continues to preach in this tumult, although 'only the nearest could hear.' Then, the service being over, the congregation disperses. But the riot is only transferred to the churchyard. No sooner does Charles Wesley appear on the path than stones whiz through the air, and enraged men push through the crowd and strike at the preacher. But Charles Perronet hangs over him and intercepts the blows. Acting as bodyguard, he defends his father's friend until the vicarage is reached. Still the rioters rave outside. Then, urged by some sudden impulse, they scatter into the town, and we see them no more. But this we see in the

mellow light of that September evening: a group of women with frightened faces, 'our sisters from Sevenoaks,' who



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY G. E. CORKE.

SHOREHAM CHURCH.

The parish church of Wesley's friend, Vincent Perronet.

steal out of Shoreham, who hasten along the road we have traversed to-day, who glide through the avenues, across the meadows, and do not rest until safe in the shelter of home."

We have already observed that the sons of the Shoreham vicar were among the first advocates of the rights of the Methodist people to receive the sacraments from the hands of their own preachers. Edward Perronet is well known as the author of the stirring hymn,

All hail the power of Jesus' name!

The hymn appeared anonymously in the Gospel Magazine in 1780, and was acknowledged by its author five years later, when he included it in a volume of Occasional Verses. Its well-known tune, Miles Lane, was written for it in the last century by William Shrubsole, the organist of Spa Fields Chapel.

One evening, when John Wesley was preaching in London, he saw Edward Perronet in the congregation, and, without asking consent, announced that he would preach next morning at five o'clock. Perronet would not disturb the service by saying nay, but appeared in the pulpit at five. After singing and prayer he said he had been called to preach, weak and inadequate, and in deference to Mr. Wesley he had done violence to his own feelings by obeying, but he should now give them the best sermon that had ever been delivered. Then opening the Bible, he read the Sermon on the Mount, and, without any comment of his own, closed the service with song and prayer. The effect was deeply impressive. Wesley was not so pleased with him when he attacked the Established Church in a satirical poem called "The Miter." It was suppressed, probably by Wesley's persuasion, though he himself in later life said, "For forty years I have been in doubts concerning that question, 'What obedience is due to heathenish priests and mitred infidels?'" Charles Wesley was shocked at the poem. It was certainly

severe, as one verse, referring to the growth of the practices of Rome, will suffice to show :

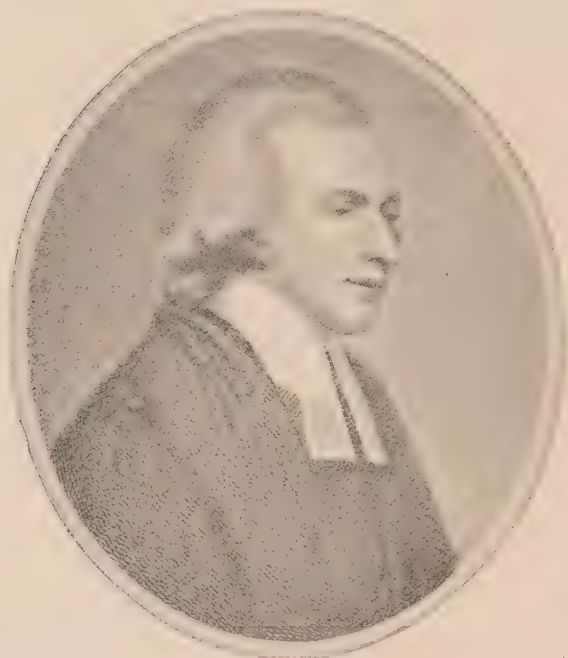
For while her orders and her rules
Are made the standard of thy schools,
And all beside of blame :
What other portion canst thou hope
But that the wise should give thee up,
Her ape, without her name ?

Perronet's strong convictions on this point led him to become a Dissenting minister at Canterbury. In 1791 he passed away, with a Doxology on his lips in harmony with his striking hymn: "Glory to God in the height of his divinity! Glory to God in the depth of his humanity! Glory to God in his all-sufficiency! Into his hands I commend my spirit."

Charles Perronet, the brother of the hymn writer, was also a Methodist itinerant, and was instrumental in a remarkable revival at Shoreham. He was frail in body, and in 1775 we find Wesley writing: "I had a long conversation with that extraordinary man, Charles Perronet. What a mystery of providence! Why is such a saint as this buried alive by continual sickness?" It is said that he was a living witness to the doctrine of entire sanctification. Other members of the Perronet family took part in the Great Revival, and the household life in the Shoreham vicarage was of the noblest Christian type. The venerable father of this Methodist parsonage died in 1785, in his ninety-second year.

Some of the other clergymen who helped Wesley have been already named. They included John Hodges, Henry Piers, Samuel Taylor, John Meriton, Charles Manning, Richard Thomas Bateman, James Creighton, and Peard Dickinson. The last named was curate to Vincent Perronet, and we shall find him at a later date assistant to Wesley at City Road Chapel, London.

Wesley's fellow-student at Oxford and comrade in Georgia, Benjamin Ingham, is worthy of honorable mention. He remained with the Moravians when Wesley left them, and



FROM A CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE.

REV. PEARD DICKINSON, M.A.

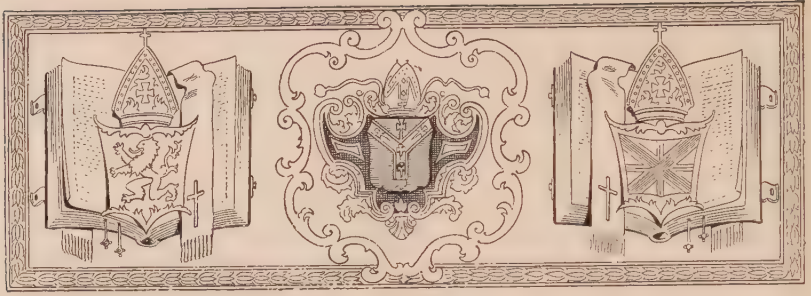
At the age of thirty-three.

became a successful evangelist in Yorkshire, organizing eighty-four societies. He was "a gentleman in manners, a saint in temper, and an apostle in labors," says Stevens. On his way to preach at Colne, Lancashire, he was once attacked by a furious mob backed by the vicar, who took him into a

house and asked him to sign a paper promising not to preach again. Ingham tore the paper in pieces. "Bring him out and we'll make him," yelled the mob. Out went the vicar. In pressed the mob, flourishing clubs "as thick as a man's leg," and were for killing Ingham on the spot. Some cried, "Heave him into the bog." A stone hit him in the neck. "See," yelled the crowd, pointing at his torn coat tails, "he has wings." Finally the vicar, relenting, took him for shelter to the vicarage.

Benjamin Ingham was very happily married to Lady Margaret Hastings, sister to Lord Huntingdon. It was her testimony, that “she was as happy as an angel,” which brought the Countess of Huntingdon to decision. Ingham separated from the Moravians in 1753, having a circuit of his own of about five hundred miles, with several thousand followers. He was present at Wesley’s Conference at Leeds, in 1755, and the question of union was considered, but this was prevented by the fact that Ingham’s societies had already separated from the Church of England and the Wesleys were not yet prepared to sanction this. Ingham ordained preachers by the laying on of hands and prayer, and was thus “far ahead of his old friend Wesley; for it was not till twenty-eight years after this that Wesley assumed episcopal functions by ordaining two of his preachers for America.”

From this time Lady Huntingdon used to call Ingham a bishop. There is no doubt that he held, with Wesley, “that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain.” It is sad to find this devoted man in despondency when his societies, rent by controversy, were reduced from eighty-four to thirteen. Lady Huntingdon’s letter greatly soothed his troubled spirit. He was a devoted friend of Grimshaw, and at great risk visited him when he was dying of malignant fever. The Wesleys loved him. Romaine, who visited him before his followers were scattered by the Sandemanian controversy, wrote of his societies: “If ever there was a Church of Christ upon earth, that was one. I paid them a visit and had a great mind to join them. There was a blessed work of God among that people till that horrid blast from the north came upon them and destroyed them all.”



CHAPTER LXXIII

Quaint John Berridge and Other Calvinistic Clergymen

GLADSTONE ON THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT.—THE ECCENTRIC VICAR OF EVERTON.—SANCTIFIED WIT.—MORE DECOROUS DIVINES.—ROMAINE AND VENN.

MR. GLADSTONE, in his Essay on the Evangelical Movement, truly said: "It was a strong, systematic, outspoken, and determined reaction against the prevailing standards both of life and preaching. It aimed at bringing back, on a large scale and by an aggressive movement, the cross, and all that the cross essentially implies, both into the teaching of the clergy and into the lives as well of the clergy as of the laity. The preaching of the Gospel became afterward a cant phrase: but that the preaching of the Gospel a hundred years ago had disappeared, not by denials, but by lapse, from the majority of Anglican pulpits is, I fear, in large measure an historic truth. To bring it back again was the aim and work of the evangelical reformers in the sphere of the teaching function. Whether they preached Christ in the best manner may be another question; but of this there is now and can be little question: that they preached Christ largely and fervently where, as a rule, he was but little and but coldly preached before. And who

is there that will not say from his heart, 'I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice?'"

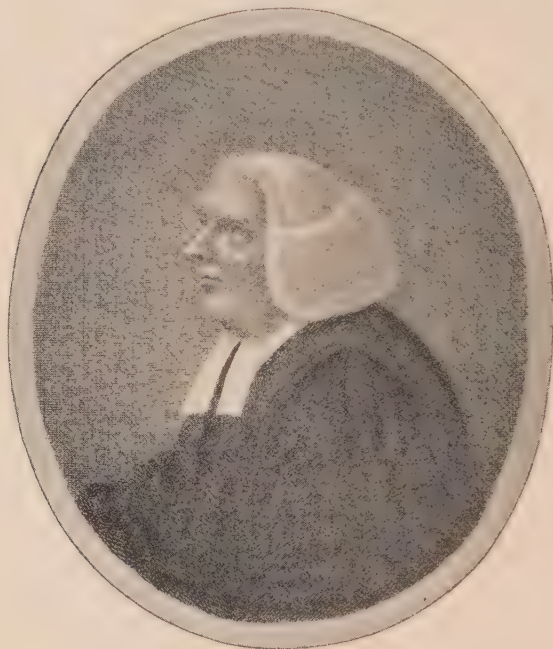
This was true of "both sorts of Methodists," as John Wesley expressed it: "those for particular and those for general redemption." And Wesley early noted the danger of the preaching of the Gospel becoming "a cant phrase." He says: "Not many years passed before William Cudworth and James Rely separated from Mr. Whitefield. These were properly antinomians; absolute, avowed enemies to the law of God, which they never preached, or proposed to preach, but termed all legalists who did. With them 'preaching the law' was an abomination. They had 'nothing to do' with the law; they would 'preach Christ,' as they called it, but without one word either of holiness or good works. Yet these were still denominated Methodists, although differing from Mr. Whitefield, both in judgment and practice, abundantly more than Mr. Whitefield did from Mr. Wesley. In the meantime Mr. Venn and Romaine began to be spoken of; and not long after Mr. Madan and Mr. Berridge, with a few other clergymen, who, although they had no connection with each other, yet preaching salvation by faith, and endeavoring to live accordingly—to be Bible Christians—were soon included in the general name of Methodists. And so indeed were all others who preached salvation by faith, and appeared more serious than their neighbors."

Among these evangelical clergy "included in the general name of Methodists" John Berridge, of Everton (1716-1793), holds a prominent place. Canon Overton marks "a strong family likeness" between him and Grimshaw. Both were eccentric, but the oddities of Berridge were more striking than those of Grimshaw. Both were stirring preachers, but

the effects of Berridge's preaching were more startling than those which attended Grimshaw. Berridge was a strong Calvinist and rushed into hot controversy ; Grimshaw's

Calvinism was of a very mild type and he held aloof from conflict.

He was a fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, of great natural genius, a thorough scholar, and a famous wit. Men like the elder Pitt, afterward Lord Chatham, were among his intimate friends. Wesley first visited him in 1758, and wrote: "A few



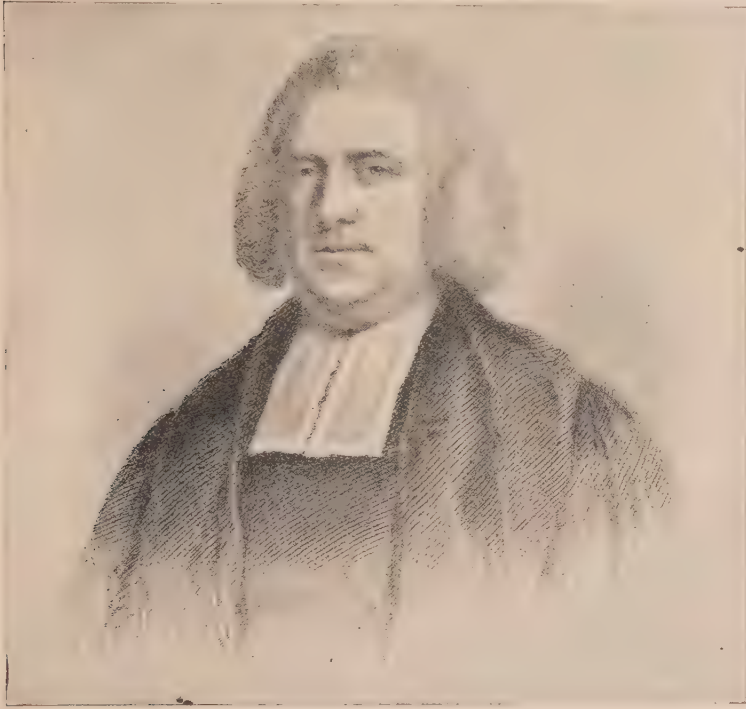
FROM A COPPERPLATE IN THE CHRISTIAN'S MAGAZINE, 1790.

REV. JOHN BERRIDGE, M.A.
Vicar of Everton, Bedfordshire.

months ago he was thoroughly convinced that by grace we are saved through faith. Immediately he began to proclaim aloud the redemption that is in Jesus; and God confirmed his own word, exactly as he did at Bristol in the beginning, by working repentance and faith in the hearers, and with the same violent outward symptoms." Strange scenes did Wesley witness in Everton Church during this and later visits.

During the first year after his conversion Berridge was

visited by a thousand persons under serious impressions, and it was computed that under his own and the joint ministry of one of his converts, the Rev. Mr. Hicks, four thousand persons were awakened to spiritual concern. His circuit covered



FROM THE ENGRAVING BY ADCOCK.

REV. HENRY VENN, M.A.

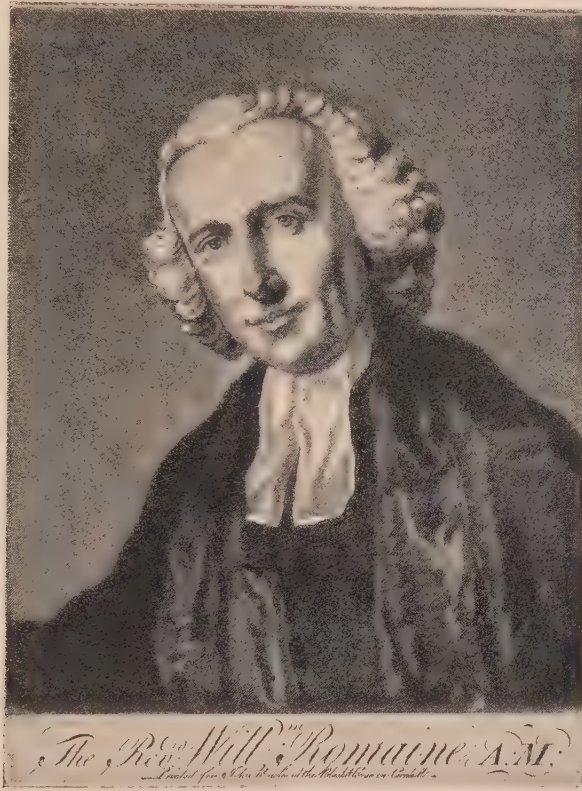
the Counties of Bedford, Cambridge, Essex, Hertford, and Huntingdon. Magistrates, country squires, and others opposed him, and among them he was distinguished by the name of the "old devil" for over twenty years. For nearly thirty years he spent three months annually in London, often preaching in Whitefield's chapels.

Southey has labeled Berridge "buffoon and fanatic," but

the Bishop of Liverpool, Dr. Ryle, after examining his sermons, affirms that "it would do no harm to the Church of England if she had a few more such 'buffoons and fanatics' among her clergy." He bubbled over with humor, but he was no professional jester. His very sedate brethren rebuked him, and Mr. Thornton wrote to him: "You told me you was born with a fool's cap on. Is it not high time it was pulled off?" Berridge replied: "A fool's cap is not so readily put off as a nightcap. One cleaves to the head, and one to the heart." "Odd things," he said, "break from me as abruptly as croaking from a raven." Yet the "odd things" were often wise enough. "Remember that a fiend has sharper parts than the sharpest of us, and that one grain of godly grace is of more worth than a hundred thousand headful of attic wit, or of philosophic, theologic, or commercial science." "A kick from the world does believers less harm than a kiss." "Nature lost her legs in paradise, and has not found them since." "If an angel proclaimed such a kind of gospel as is often hawked from press and pulpit, till his wings dropped off, he would never produce a grain of true morality arising from the love of God." "A man may be constitutionally meek as the lamb, kind as the spaniel, cheerful as the lark, and modest as the owl; but these things are not sanctification." "A Smithfield fire would unite the sheep of Christ and frighten the goats away; but when the world ceases to persecute they begin to fight each other. The worst part of the sheep is in its head, . . . and with this they are ever butting each other."

A characteristic letter to Lady Huntingdon reveals the man and his work. She urged him to come to Bath to preach in her chapel in exchange with a "Bath divine." He declines, and writes: "I fear my weekly circuits would not

suit a London or a Bath divine, nor any tender evangelist that is environed with prunella. Long rides and miry roads in sharp weather; cold houses to sit in, with moderate fuel, and three or four children roaring or rocking about you;



FROM A CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE ENGRAVING.

coarse fare and meager drink; lumpy beds to lie on and too short for the feet, and stiff blankets, like boards, for a covering. Rise at five in the morning to preach; at seven breakfast on tea that smells very sickly; at eight mount a horse, with boots never cleaned, and then ride home praising God

for all his mercies. But enough of these matters. Let us now talk of Jesus, whom I treat in my letters as I deal with in my heart, crowd him into a corner, when the first place and the whole room belongeth of right to himself. He has taught me to labor for him more cheerfully, and to loathe myself more heartily, than I could before. I want his fountain every day, his intercession every moment, and would not give a groat for the broadest fig leaves or the brightest human rags to cover me."

Berridge's epitaph, prepared by himself—excepting the date of his death—is as characteristic as this letter. We copy the inscription from his tomb:

HERE LIE
THE EARTHLY REMAINS OF
JOHN BERRIDGE,
LATE VICAR OF EVERTON,
AND AN ITINERANT SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST,
WHO LOVED HIS MASTER, AND HIS WORK,
AND AFTER RUNNING ON HIS ERRANDS MANY YEARS,
WAS CALLED UP TO WAIT ON HIM ABOVE.
READER,
ART THOU BORN AGAIN?
NO SALVATION WITHOUT A NEW BIRTH!
I WAS BORN IN SIN, FEBRUARY, 1716.
REMAINED IGNORANT OF MY FALLEN STATE TILL 1730.
LIVED PROUDLY ON FAITH AND WORKS FOR SALVATION
TILL 1751.
WAS ADMITTED TO EVERTON VICARAGE, 1755.
FLED TO JESUS ALONE FOR REFUGE, 1756.
FELL ASLEEP IN CHRIST JESUS, JANUARY 22, 1793.

EPITAPH OF REV. JOHN BERRIDGE IN EVERTON CHURCHYARD.

It is characteristic that its writer caused himself to be buried in a part of the churchyard where up to that time only those had been interred who had destroyed themselves, or come to an ignominious end. Before his death he had often said that he would take this effectual means of consecrating that unhallowed spot.

It would be difficult to find a more striking contrast than that which the decorous divine William Romaine (1714-1795) presents to Berridge. Great congregations flocked to hear this learned, grave Calvinistic preacher at St. George's, Hanover Square. He was charged with vulgarizing the fashionable congregation by attracting so many to the church. He was appointed evening lecturer at St. Dunstan's, Fleet Street, but the rector barred his entrance to the pulpit. Lord Mansfield decided that the church was his after seven in the evening, but the churchwardens kept the door locked. When they were compelled to give way



DRAWN BY MORLAND.

AFTER THE ENGRAVING BY HIGHAM.

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, HANOVER SQ., LONDON.

they refused candles, so that Romaine preached by the light of one candle which he held in his hand. He became rector of St. Ann's, Blackfriars, where he preached the sermons which afterward were shaped into *The Life, Walk, and Triumph of Faith*. He belonged to Lady Huntingdon's Connection until she seceded from the Establishment, in

1781, though he retained his friendship with her. Though he differed so widely from Wesley on the points of Calvinism, he was not alienated from him, as some others were, and in 1763 we find Wesley writing to Lady Huntingdon, "Only Mr. Romaine has shown a truly sympathizing spirit and acted the part of a brother."

Another famous evangelical was Henry Venn (1724-1797), curate of Clapham, and afterward Vicar of Huddersfield and of Yelling. Like Romaine, he belonged to Lady Huntingdon's Connection until her secession. He was the author of *The Complete Duty of Man*, an evangelical counterblast to the older *Whole Duty of Man*. One of his letters won the ready assent of Wesley: "I, no less than you, preach justification by faith only, the absolute necessity of holiness, the increasing mortification of sin, and rejection of all past experiences and attainments. I abhor, as you do, all antinomian abuse of the doctrine of Christ, and desire to see my people walking even as he walked."

One of the broadest letters ever written by the founder of Methodism, and containing the famous motto of the Epworth League, was written in answer to the above in 1765: "I want you to understand me inside and out. Then I say, *Sic sum: si placeo, utere* [Thus I am: if you like me, use me]. . . . I desire to have a league offensive and defensive with every soldier of Christ. We have not only one faith, one hope, one Lord, but are directly engaged in one warfare. We are carrying the war into the devil's own quarters, who therefore summons all his hosts to war. Come, then, ye that love him, to the help of the Lord—to the help of the Lord against the mighty! I am now well-nigh miles emeritus senex, sexagenarius [an old soldier who has served out his time and is entitled to his discharge—a sexagenarian]; yet I trust to fight a little longer."

Henry Venn's Calvinism was not of so extreme a type as that of some of his brethren. When asked about a young minister, whether he were a Calvinist or Arminian, he replied, "I really do not know; he is a sincere disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is of infinitely more importance than



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

ST. ANN'S CHURCH, BLACKFRIARS.

Where Romaine preached his sermon on The Life, Walk, and Triumph of Faith.

his being a disciple of Calvin or Arminius." Venn was a moderate Calvinist, of the same school as many of the later evangelicals in the Church of England. Of other clergymen of the same type, such as Madan, Newton, Scott, Cecil, and the two Milners, we must give an account later.

Wesley states his feeling toward the Calvinistic evangelicals when he says of the Methodists who remained with him, "They tenderly love many who are Calvinists, though they do not love their opinions."



CHAPTER LXXIV

Help from the Mountains of Switzerland

ON THE SHORE OF LAKE GENEVA.—FOR THE CHURCH OR FOR THE ARMY.—FINDING THE METHODISTS.—A MEMORABLE CONVERSION.—FLETCHER, WESLEY, AND WALSH.—AN ECCLESIASTICAL PHENOMENON.—DUNHAM OR MADELEY?

“SIR,” said Henry Venn to one who asked him his opinion of Fletcher, “he was a luminary. A luminary, did I say? He was a sun! I have known all the great men for these fifty years, but I have known none like him.” Such was the judgment of a contemporary. Looking backward over a century, Dr. Rigg, one of the most judicial of Methodist writers, affirms that “in the galaxy of names which make up the historic roll of the Evangelical Revival, from the Oxford days of Wesley to the rise of Charles Simeon’s ascendancy at Cambridge, there is not one star at once so ‘bright’ and so ‘particular’ as Jean Guillaume de la Flechère, or, as we all now know him, John Fletcher. That such a one as Fletcher should ever come to be identified with English Methodism would have been sufficiently strange; that he should have been deemed by Wesley fittest of all men to become its leader and universal pastor in succession to himself is beyond most things wonderful.”

For Fletcher was a Swiss, "purely and intensely Swiss," by birth and education. His father was a scion of a noble lineage in Savoy, and allied to the house of Sardinia. After John Fletcher's marriage his wife found in his desk a seal. "Is this yours?" she asked. "Yes," replied the poor country parson, "but I have not used it for many years." "Why?" "Because it bears a coronet nearly such as is the insignia of your English dukes. Were I to use that seal,



AFTER A WATER COLOR SKETCH BY JOBSON.

NYON, WHERE JOHN FLETCHER WAS BORN.

it might lead to frivolous inquiries about my family, and subject me to the censure of valuing myself on such distinctions."

The fine old family mansion still stands, in the town of Nyon, on the north shore of the Lake of Geneva. Like many of the more ancient houses in Switzerland, the entrance is by a spiral stone staircase which opens into a spacious hall. On one side of this is the room that Fletcher occupied in one of his visits to his fatherland, and it still retains his venerated name. One of the windows commands a view of a beautiful wood, his favorite haunt in meditative hours, and beyond a

far-extended landscape, varied with hill and dell, vineyards and pastures, bounded by the dark chain of the Jura Mountains. At a few paces distance from the chateau there is a terrace which overlooks one of the finest prospects in that romantic country. The whole expanse of Lake Lemane is spread out. Tracing its margin, so gracefully curved, there are many richly wooded bays, and at the farthest extremity, on the right, appears Geneva, the cradle of the Reformation and of liberty; on the left Lausanne and the celebrated Castle of Chillon; while the horizon is indented by those Alpine peaks which embosom the hospitable Convent of St. Bernard and the lovely valley of Chamouni.

Here John Fletcher was born, September 12, 1729. Wesley states that in his early childhood he had much of the fear of God and great tenderness of conscience. He received a thorough university training at Geneva, and at first intended to take orders in the Swiss Reformed Church. "But afterward," he writes, "feeling I was unequal to so great a burden, and disgusted by the necessity I should be under to subscribe to the doctrine of predestination, I yielded to the desire of my friends who would have me go into the army." This reference to Calvinism is of importance in view of the controversy in which he was to take so leading a part in England. He now laid aside theology, studied military engineering, and raised a Swiss company to serve in Brazil for Portugal. At Lisbon he accepted a captain's commission, and agreed to serve the Portuguese on board a man-of-war. But of this his parents did not approve, and refused to supply him with money. He determined to go without the cash, but while he was waiting for the ship to start the upsetting of a teakettle scalded him so seriously that he had to keep his bed. "During that time," says Wesley, "the ship sailed

for Brazil, but it was observed that it was heard of no more." He set out to receive a commission in the Dutch service, procured for him by an uncle who was a colonel in Flanders; but peace was concluded, his uncle died, and his way to a military career was again closed.

He came to England in 1752, with some companions, for the purpose of learning English. At the London custom-house they met with surly treatment and their letters were taken from them. Compelled to wait at an inn, they found

their foreign money a difficulty. "Give me your money," said a well-dressed Jew who spoke French, and the unsuspecting Fletcher handed him £90. When he informed his friends they exclaimed, "Your money is gone!" But



FROM THE ENGRAVING BY S. LACEY.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF JOHN FLETCHER.

before breakfast was ended the honest Jew returned and gave Fletcher the full amount in English coin. At Hatfield he studied English diligently, and his charming manners won him much popularity. A French minister obtained him the post of tutor to the sons of Mr. Thomas Hill, a high-principled English gentleman of Tern Hall, Shropshire, and member of Parliament for Shrewsbury County. Here he remained for seven years, greatly beloved by the whole family. His early religious convictions had been deadened by his association with deistical companions, and he had enrolled himself in their party for a short time; but at Tern Hall he again became professedly a Christian, although of formal type. He

was startled from his security by a dream of the judgment day, and was conscience-stricken by the gentle rebuke of a servant.

Mr. Hill went up to London to attend Parliament in 1754, taking his family and Fletcher with him. At St. Albans Fletcher stayed behind, and when asked the reason for this replied, "As I was walking I met with a poor woman who talked so sweetly of Jesus Christ that I knew not how the time passed away."

"I shall wonder," said Mrs. Hill, "if our tutor does not turn Methodist by and by."

"Methodist, madame?" said he. "Pray what is that?"

"Why, the Methodists are a people that do nothing but pray; they are praying all day and all night."

"Are they?" said he. "Then, by the help of God, I will find them out."

He did find them out not long after, and became a member of Richard Edwards's class at the Foundry. He was soon convinced that he needed "some inward change," and that he had never understood the nature of saving faith. "Is it possible," he wrote, "that I, who have always been accounted so religious; who have made divinity my study, and received the premium of piety from my university for writings on divine subjects; is it possible that I should yet be so ignorant as not to know what faith is?" He found guidance in Wesley's Journal, where he learned, he says, "that we should not build on what we feel, but that we should go to Christ with all our sins and with all our hardness of heart." January 23, 1755, was the day on which he rose from his knees and found himself a "new creature." Sorely tempted in the evening to doubt the reality of the change and the possibility of perseverance, he opened his Bible and read: "Cast thy

burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee. He will not suffer the righteous to be moved;" and again the words met him, "I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, neither forsake thee; fear not, neither be dismayed." He writes: "My hope was now greatly increased, and I thought I saw myself conqueror over sin, hell, and all manner of affliction. With this beautiful promise I shut my Bible, and as I shut it I cast my eye on the words, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do it.' So having asked perseverance and grace to serve God till death, I went cheerfully to take my rest."

Fletcher now heard a divine call to preach, and wrote to Wesley, whom he called his "spiritual guide," telling him that when he was seven years of age he had resolved on serving Christ's Church if ever he was fit for it. On Sunday, March 6, 1757, he was ordained deacon, and on the Sunday following he received priest's orders in the Chapel Royal at St. James's Palace. On this latter Sunday he hastened from his ordination to assist Wesley in one of his heavy sacramental services in Snowsfield Chapel, and thus began his ministerial life in a Methodist meetinghouse. "How wonderful," wrote Wesley, "are the ways of God! When my bodily strength failed, and none in England were able and willing to assist me, he sent me help from the mountains of Switzerland, and an helpmeet for me in every respect; where could I have found such another?"

He soon became greatly beloved by the Methodists, and found a choice friend in Thomas Walsh, of whom he wrote, "I wish I could attend him everywhere, as Elisha attended Elijah." West Street Chapel became the Bethel of these saintly men. When Walsh died, two years later, Fletcher was bowed down with grief.

In 1758 Wesley introduced Fletcher to Lady Huntingdon,

and at her suggestion he preached to the French prisoners at Tunbridge. They were deeply affected, and petitioned Bishop Sherlock to allow him to officiate as their weekly chaplain, but this was refused. Two years later Fletcher tells Charles Wesley that he has "passed three hours with a modern prodigy—a humble and pious countess." From this time he preached and celebrated the Communion at her house and chapels.

In the spring of 1760 he made a pilgrimage to Everton, and introduced himself to Berridge as "a new convert, who had taken the liberty to wait upon him for the benefit of his instruction and advice."

Berridge asked what countryman he was.

"A Swiss, from the canton of Berne," was the reply.

"From Berne! Then probably you can give me some account of a young countryman of yours, John Fletcher, who has lately preached a few times for the Messrs. Wesley, and of whose talents, learning, and piety they both speak in terms of high eulogy. Do you know him?"

"Yes, sir, I know him intimately; and did those gentlemen know him as well, they would not speak so highly of him. He is more obliged to their partial friendship than to his own merits."

"You surprise me," said Berridge.

"I have the best reason for speaking of John Fletcher as I do. I am John Fletcher."

"If you be John Fletcher," replied Berridge, "you must take my pulpit to-morrow."

Thus commenced his friendship with Berridge. Lady Huntingdon, accompanied by Martin Madan and Henry Venn, joined him at Everton, and we find him assisting in a marvelous three days' series of services, mostly in the open air,

when ten thousand persons assembled, and many men and women fell to the ground and wept bitterly. The influence was overwhelming when, at the close, the assembled thousands, with the countess and five clergy, united in singing Wesley's hymn :

Arm of the Lord, awake, awake!
Thine own immortal strength put on !

When Mr. Hill sent his sons to Cambridge University, in 1760, he offered their tutor the choice of two parochial liv-



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

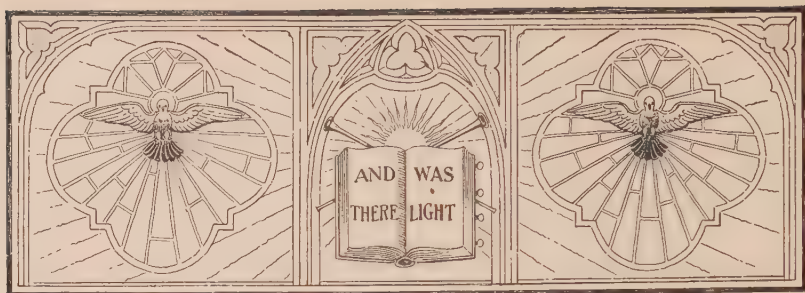
FROM THE ENGRAVING BY SHARP.

MADELEY PARISH CHURCH AND VICARAGE.

Where Rev. John Fletcher was vicar.

ings, and there occurred what Canon Overton describes as “a very unusual phenomenon in the eighteenth century.” One parish was Dunham, “where the population was small, the income good, and the village situated in the midst of a fine sporting country.” These were no recommendations in the

eyes of Fletcher, and he declined the living on these very grounds. Madeley had the advantage of having only half the income and double the population of Dunham. On being asked if he would accept Madeley, if the vicar of that parish would consent to exchange it for Dunham, Fletcher gladly assented. The Vicar of Madeley did not object, and went to Dunham. So Fletcher went to Madeley, where he was to spend a quarter of a century.

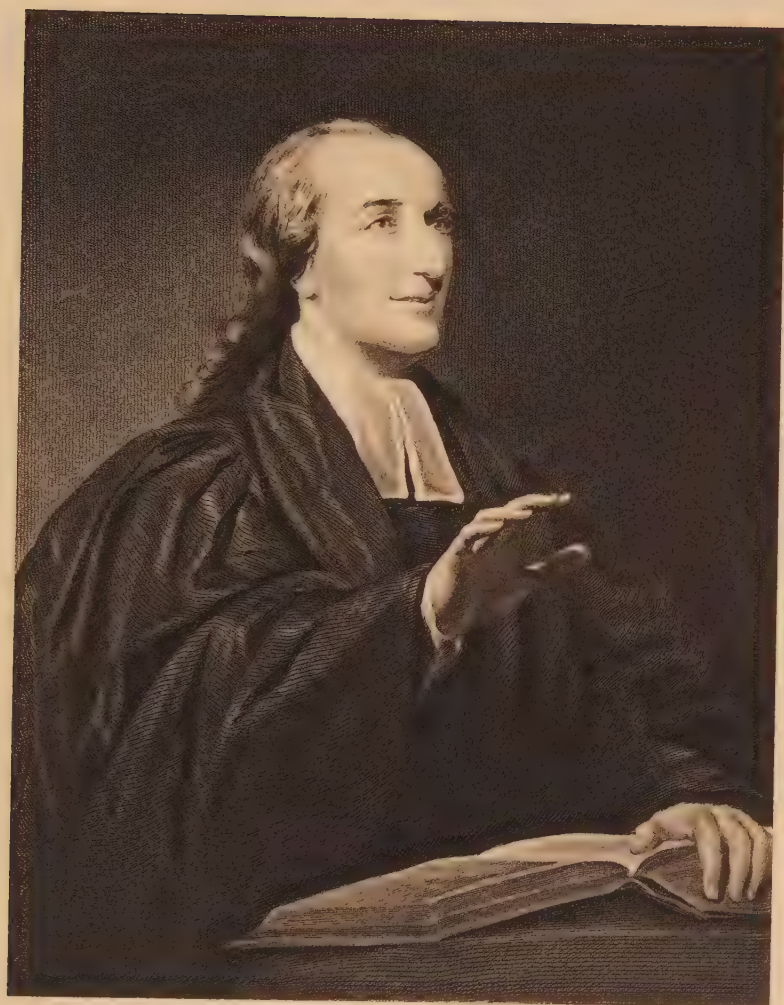


CHAPTER LXXV

John Fletcher at Madeley, Trevecca, and on the Appian Way

VICAR AND PARISHIONERS.—A FEROCIOUS BUTCHER AND A FIERY FURNACE.—“A METHODIST OF THE OLD TYPE.”—AMONG FOES AND FRIENDS.—IN THE FOOTPRINTS OF ST. PAUL.

“JOHN FLETCHER, clerk, was inducted to the vicarage of Madeley, October 17, 1760.” Such is the entry in an old book in the parish vestry. Fletcher found Madeley, in Shropshire, a rough parish, for in Coalbrook Dale and Madeley Wood there were colliers and iron workers who had not yet felt the influence of the Methodist reformation, and were more ignorant and brutal than any people to whom he had yet ministered. His associations with the working people with whom he “met in class” had revealed to him the refining influences of Christian fellowship, and Dr. Rigg has well said: “No Anglican formalism, no English class prejudice, came between his spiritual instincts and yearnings and the good poor people whose religious meetings he had learned to love. His Swiss homeliness and simplicity, the democratic simplicity of his native mountains, had something to do with this. Here, doubtless, is to be found his best preparation, his real preparation, for the life of pastoral duty which his English friend and patron



placed within his reach when he presented him to the living of Madeley. . . . Fletcher was not an Englishman, and had not exactly an English character, but he was a scholar, a

gentleman, and a spiritual, sympathetic Christian; he was equally at home among all classes of society. He was superior to social prejudices. In these respects Wesley and he were of one heart and soul."

Like his friend Wesley, Fletcher found his work more fruitful among the industrial classes than among the gentry. He addressed an appeal to the principal inhabitants of his parish, twelve years after he came among them, with a characteristic dedication. "Gentlemen," he writes, "you are no less entitled to my private labor than the inferior class of my parishioners. As you do not choose to partake with them of my



FROM THE RARE ENGRAVING IN CENTENARY HALL, LONDON.

evening instructions, I take the liberty to present you with some of my morning meditations. May these well-meant efforts of my pen be more acceptable to you than those of my tongue! And may you carefully read in your closets what you have perhaps inattentively heard in the church!

I appeal to the Searcher of hearts that I had rather impart truth than receive tithes. You kindly bestow the latter upon me; grant me the favor of seeing you receive favorably the former from, gentlemen, your affectionate minister and obedient servant, J. Fletcher."

He soon got into trouble by his efforts to suppress the "bacchanals," or at least to moderate their madness. He preached against drunkenness, shows, and bull baiting. "The publicans and maltmen," he writes to Charles Wesley, "will not forgive me. They think that to preach against drunkenness and to cut their purse is the same thing." The feast day of Madeley Church was on St. Michael's Day, and this had long been the village "Wake Sunday," when the people went wild with revelry. On this day, in 1763, Fletcher entered the pulpit in great depression, and was so disturbed that he could not remember either his text or sermon. He turned, however, to the lesson for the day, and thought he would comment upon that. It was Daniel iii.

The wife of a butcher, who had threatened that he would cut her throat if she went to church, had determined on that same day to face her husband's fury. When he found her dressed ready for church he said that he would not cut her throat, as he had intended, but he would heat the oven and throw her into it the moment she came home. The woman went prayerfully but tremblingly to church, and while Fletcher was speaking of the three Hebrew children and Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace she found all that the preacher said applied to her. She went home "nothing doubting," she said, "that God either would take me to heaven, if he suffered me to be burned to death, or that he would in some way deliver me." When she got to her own door she saw flames issuing from the oven, and expected to

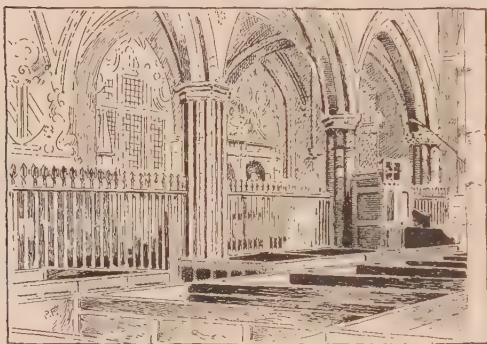
be thrown into it, for her husband was notorious for his reckless violence. On entering the house, however, to her utter astonishment she saw her husband upon his knees praying for the forgiveness of his sins. He caught his wife in his arms, earnestly begged her pardon, and became a diligent seeker after God. Fletcher vouches for the truth of this story, and says, "Now I know why my sermon was taken from me; namely, that God might thus magnify his mercy."

Some of Fletcher's parishioners cried out, "He is a Methodist—a downright Methodist!" and others said, "Nay, but he speaketh the truth." Some of the farmers and tradesmen talked about turning him out of his living. The neighboring clergy attacked him from their pulpits, and action was taken against him under the Conventicle Act for holding services in a widow's cottage. The widow and a young man who had read and prayed in Fletcher's absence were arrested. The bishop would not even reply to Fletcher's appeal for his intervention. The widow was fined £20.

In the midst of these troubles Fletcher was encouraged by some genuine conversions, and he gathered the converts into classes under rules substantially the same as Wesley's. He had accepted the living contrary to the advice of Wesley, but this caused no estrangement. When Wesley visited Madeley in 1764 he wrote, "It was a great comfort to me to converse once more with a Methodist of the old type, denying himself and taking up his cross." The congregation overflowed into the churchyard, and a window was removed that those outside might hear the "Arch-Methodist." In 1765 Alexander Mather was in charge of the Salop Circuit (next year called Staffordshire Circuit), with its five hundred and eighty-seven members, and he was warmly welcomed by Fletcher as a co-worker.

Walter Sellon, who had been one of the masters of Kingswood School, was now curate of Smisby and of Breedon-on-the-Hill, in Leicestershire, and he and Fletcher exchanged pulpits. Breedon Church is famous for its picturesque situation on a high hill. Long processions of singing worshipers

climbed the limestone rock to hear Fletcher preach in the pulpit of "dear Walter," as Wesley calls him. The pulpit still remains.



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH.

INTERIOR OF CHURCH ON THE HILL, BREEDON.

Wesley often occupied its pulpit.

Once, when Mr. Fletcher was going to preach, the clerk thought to recoup himself for extra cleaning. He placed

himself at the church door and charged every nonparishioner one penny. But the saint was more than a match for the sinner. When the service was ended Mr. Fletcher said to the congregation: "I've not felt my spirit moved so much these sixteen years last past as I have done to-day. I have heard that the clerk of this parish has demanded, and has actually received, money from divers strangers before he would suffer them to enter the church. I desire that all who have paid money in this way for hearing the Gospel will come to me and I will return what they have paid. And as to this iniquitous clerk, his money perish with him!"

Fletcher also visited Bath and Bristol, and preached in Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Bath in the year it was opened, 1765. "Deep and awful," wrote the countess, "are the

impressions made on every hand. Dear Mr. Fletcher's preaching is truly apostolic." At Brighton he enjoyed intercourse with Romaine, Venn, and other evangelicals. He preached at Whitefield's Tabernacle, in Tottenham Court Road. The countess visited Madeley in 1767, and heard Captain Scott preach, from the horse block of the parsonage, to an immense crowd curious to see the famous countess and a preaching officer. "God keep him zealous and simple!" exclaims Fletcher. "I believe this red coat will shame many a black one. I am sure he shames me!"

At the time Lady Huntingdon visited Fletcher she was busy with preparations for opening her college at Trevecca, of which she appointed Fletcher principal in 1768. He undertook this work without fee or reward, and it was understood that he would not leave Madeley, but simply visit the college as frequently as he could; "and," writes Joseph Benson, the first head master, "he was received as an angel of God. . . . Every soul caught fire from the flame that burned in his soul." "Being convinced that to be 'filled with the Holy Ghost' was a better qualification for the ministry of the Gospel than any classical learning, after speaking a while in the schoolroom he used frequently to say, 'As many of you as are athirst for this fullness of the Spirit follow me into my room.' On this many of us have instantly followed him, and there continued until noon, wrestling like Jacob for the blessing." It was the same wherever Fletcher went. Language seems to fail those who tried to describe the influence of his presence. "It is not possible," says Benson, "for me to describe the veneration in which we all held him."

After seventeen years of absence from his native land Fletcher set out to visit Switzerland, in 1770, with his friend, Mr. Ireland. While in the south of France he wished to

visit the Protestants in the Cévennes Mountains, the descendants of the persecuted Albigenses. His friend tried to dissuade him from attempting the difficult journey on foot, but Fletcher replied, "Shall I make a visit on horseback, and at ease, to those poor cottagers whose fathers were hunted along the rocks like partridges on the mountains? No; I will visit them under the plainest appearance, with my staff in my hand." He set out alone, and in the twilight entered a cottage, conversed with the timid people until they were charmed and offered him their best fare; he prayed with them, and accepted shelter for the night. The next day the poor cottager—who was a Romanist—himself told his neighbors that he had nearly refused to admit a stranger into his house "who was more an angel than a man."

As the travelers entered Rome by the famous Appian Way Fletcher insisted on the driver stopping as they approached it, and said to Mr. Ireland, "I cannot ride over ground where the apostle Paul once walked, chained to a soldier." As soon as he set his foot upon the old Roman road "he took off his hat; and, walking on with his eyes lifted up to heaven, he gave God thanks for the glorious truths which Paul preached. He rejoiced that in England these truths were still published; and prayed that they might be revived in Italy. He reviewed the life, the travels, the labors, and the sufferings of the great apostle; his remarks being intermixed with prayer and praise, and the man himself resembling an incarnation of devotion." He preached in the pulpits of his birthplace, Nyon, and when he left multitudes thronged the road and escorted him for two miles. "O sir," said a venerable minister of seventy years, "how unfortunate for my country! During my lifetime it has produced but one angel of a man, and now it is our lot to lose him!"



CHAPTER LXXVI

Erin's new Era of Light and Life

WESLEY ON THE IRISH PROBLEM AND PEOPLE.—STONING THE "SWAD-
DLERS" AT DUBLIN.—SIDE LIGHTS ON THE SOCIAL CONDITION OF
IRELAND.—THE SALVATION OF THE PEASANTRY.—A STORM AT CORK.

WITH characteristic sagacity the "first of theological statesmen" struck at the root of the Irish Protestant problem when he wrote in his Journal in 1747, "Nor is it any wonder that those who are born papists generally live and die such, when the Protestants can find no better ways to convert them than penal laws and acts of Parliament." A leading Irish minister, the Rev. C. H. Crookshank, has said: "For hundreds of years the truth as it is in Jesus was associated in the minds of the native population with what was considered an alien race, maintained by the sword of power, and propagated by a series of penal enactments as odious for their injustice as they were contemptible for their inefficiency. Thus our fathers sowed the wind and we are reaping the whirlwind."

Twelve years before Wesley visited Ireland Bishop Berkeley had advocated the very methods which Wesley used for reaching the hearts of the Irish people: the employment of lay preachers taken from the people, speaking their tongue,

and "well instructed in the first principles of religion." The Established Church was feeble, and spiritually paralyzed, and Thomas Jackson, in his *Life of Charles Wesley*, was justified in claiming that even the forms of Protestantism would at this day be extinct in most of the country had it not been for the new energy that was infused into the Irish Protestant churches by Wesley and his helpers. We shall see that, while the progress of Methodism in Ireland has not been so rapid as elsewhere, owing to racial estrangements and deep-rooted Romanism, yet the fruit of Irish Methodism may be found in almost every land, and America and Australasia owe a mighty debt to Erin.

Wesley crossed the Irish Channel forty-two times, and spent six years of his busy life in the island. The bells were ringing for church when he first entered Dublin Bay, on Sunday morning, August 9, 1747. In the afternoon he preached in St. Mary's Church "to as gay and senseless a congregation" as he ever saw.

Thomas Williams, one of his lay itinerants, had preceded him in the summer, and had already formed a society of two hundred and eighty members. Wesley met them at five o'clock on Monday morning, and preached at six in a crowded room. Day after day he went through the Rules of Society, and examined the members, finding many who "appeared to be strong in faith." He came to the conclusion that "the people in general are of more teachable spirit than in most parts of England. But on that very account they must be watched over with more care, being equally susceptible of good and ill impressions."

The curate of St. Mary's commended Wesley's sermon in strong terms, but he expressed the most rooted prejudice against lay preachers, and said the Archbishop of Dublin

was resolved to suffer no such irregularities in his diocese. Thereupon Wesley called on the brethren to pour out their souls to God; on Tuesday saw the archbishop himself, and in a conversation of two or three hours "answered abundance of objections."

The Methodist services were held in a building in Marlborough Street originally designed for a Lutheran church. Here "many of the rich, and ministers of all denominations," came to hear Wesley and his companion, John Trembath. He conversed with many at the house of his host, Mr. Lunell, a banker. This friend afterward gave £400 toward a chapel in Whitefriar Street. To his friend the English banker, Mr. Blackwell, of Lewisham, Wesley wrote of his first impressions of the Irish people: "For natural sweetness of temper, for courtesy and hospitality, I have never seen any people like the Irish. . . . They receive the word of God with all gladness and readiness of mind. The danger is that it should not take deep root." "At least ninety-nine in a hundred of the native Irish remain in the religion of their forefathers. The Protestants . . . are nearly all transplanted lately from England;" "and they are much mended by the removal, having left all their roughness and surliness behind them."

After spending a fortnight in Dublin Wesley returned to England, and was succeeded a fortnight later by his brother Charles, with Charles Perronet as his companion, and they remained in the country six months. When Charles arrived he found that after his brother left a papist mob had almost wrecked Marlborough Street Chapel, burning pulpit and benches and wounding the worshipers with shillalabs. The mayor was powerless, and the grand jury threw out bills brought against the rioters, who were thus indirectly encouraged. The preachers were followed to their lodgings by a

violent rabble, who shouted "Swaddlers!" This nickname arose out of a Christmas sermon preached, before the Wesleys arrived, by John Cennick, on "the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Some Romish hearer, ignorant of the Bible, and supposing this text an absurd Protestant invention, caught at the word and called the Methodists "Swaddlers." "The word," says Wesley, "sticks to us all, not excepting the clergy."

At the peril of his life Charles Wesley preached on Oxmanton Green. The mob killed one constable and then hung him up in triumph; a woman caught picking a pocket was beaten to death; a poor, weakly man, of Mr. Cennick's Moravian society, was trampled to death. Charles Wesley at last arrested the attention of the papists by quotations from their own liturgy and from à Kempis. They ceased to shout and began to weep. Soldiers also gathered round, and a rumor spread that Wesley was a good Catholic because he quoted à Kempis! A house was obtained near Dolphin's barn. The mayor succeeded in gaining control of the more riotous people. Charles Wesley took the Methodists to St. Patrick's to Communion on Sunday, preached five times, and "was as fresh as in the morning." The storm revived again and Wesley was stoned, receiving a blow for the first time, although chivalrous Charles Perronet interposed his broader back to screen him.

Good news came from the surrounding country, where some of the preachers had been at work. Charles Wesley took horse for Tyrrell's Pass, and heard Methodist tunes sung or whistled by the wayside. The people of the town crowded out to hear him. "Never," he writes, "have I spoken to more hungry souls. They devoured every word. Some expressed their satisfaction in a way peculiar to them and

whistled for joy. Few such feasts have I had since I left England. It refreshed my body more than meat or drink. God has begun a great work here. The people of Tyrrell's



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

AFTER A WOODCUT.

INTERIOR OF ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL.

"Charles Wesley took the Methodists to St. Patrick's to Communion."

Pass were wicked to a proverb; swearers, drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, thieves, etc., from time immemorial. But now the scene is entirely changed. Not an oath is heard nor

a drunkard seen among them. They are turned from darkness to light. Near one hundred are joined in society, and following hard after the pardoning God."

At Athlone heaps of stones had been gathered, and John Healey was knocked off his horse by the priest's servant. He was about to use a knife on the prostrate Methodist when a poor woman rushed from her cabin to his assistance, and was half killed by a blow. The dragoons at last came out and dispersed the crowd. Poor Healey was carried slowly on to Athlone from the hut where he lay wounded, and Charles Wesley preached from the window of a ruined house in the market place to two thousand people. The party went on their way "very slowly, for the sake of our patient," and halted, at the place where he had been wounded, to sing a song of praise to God. At Moat the mother of their host, nearly eighty years of age, was led into the joy of salvation. At Philipstown above forty converted dragoons joined in singing and conference, and bore testimony to the work of the Methodists in the army. Returning to Dublin, Charles Wesley found that many had joined the society, and his brother having arrived, he left for England, followed by the blessing of hundreds of warm-hearted people.

John Wesley was welcomed on his second visit, 1748, with great joy, so that his voice could scarcely be heard for some time for the noise of the people in praising God. He soon began to preach at five in the morning, "an unheard-of thing in Ireland," and he continued to do this at Philipstown, Tullamore, Clara, and Athlone. He rebuked the leaders for sending him "pompous accounts," which had led him to expect six or seven hundred members where he found not quite four hundred, and condemned the "hateful custom of painting things beyond the life."

His Journal throws side lights on the condition of Ireland in the last century. With regard to Athlone he writes: "I scarce ever saw a better behaved or more attentive congregation. Indeed so civil a people as the Irish in general I never



DRAWN BY W. P. SNYDER.

INTERIOR OF A CABIN.

AFTER WOODCUTS.

A FISHER'S HOVEL.

AN IRISH FARM.

"Once well inhabited, but now mostly desolate."—*Wesley's Journal*.

saw, either in Europe or America. . . . The Shannon comes within a mile of the house where I preached. It is here ten or twelve miles over, though scarce thirty miles from its fountain head. There are many islands in it, once inhabited,

but now mostly desolate. In almost every one are the ruins of a church; in one the remains of no less than seven. I fear God has still a controversy with this land because it is defiled with blood."

A few days later he rode to Clara, where he was quickly informed there was to begin in an hour's time a famous cockfight, to which almost all the country was coming from every side. He at once "began preaching in the street. One or two hundred stopped and listened a while, pulled off their hats, and forgot their diversion." At Tullamore, preaching in the open air, a violent storm of hail came on during the latter part of the sermon. Wesley "desired the people to cover their heads; but the greater part of them would not," nor did anyone go away before the service was ended.

About this time he read Sir James Ware's *Antiquities of Ireland*, which he calls "an extremely dull book." "By the vast number of ruins which are seen in all parts," writes Wesley, "I had always suspected what he shows at large; namely, that in ancient times Ireland was more populous, tenfold, than it is now; many that were large cities being now ruinous heaps; many shrunk into inconsiderable villages."

At Tullamore Wesley had an opportunity of inspecting the homes in which the peasants were doomed to live. "One who looks on the common Irish cabins," he writes, "might imagine Saturn still reigned here:

The narrow cave a cold retreat affords,
And beasts and men screens with one common shade.

Common shade, indeed; for no light can come into the earth or straw built cavern, on the master or his cattle, but at one hole; which is both chimney, window, and door."

Charles Wesley again visited Ireland in August, 1748. "God sent us wind out of his treasury, the fairest we could have, which brought us smoothly and safely into Dublin Bay." He believed the people were ripe for the Gospel. "Behold! a troop cometh! The angel is come down; the water is troubled; and many are just stepping into the pool." He went to Cork, where the lay preachers had met with great success. A visible reformation had taken place in the manners of the people. Swearing was seldom heard in the streets, and the churches and altars were crowded, to the astonishment of opposers. He took the open field and preached to ten thousand hearers, Protestants and papists, high and low. Two hundred members were enrolled in the society; yet he had occasion to repeat his brother's complaint of the superficiality of their religious character: "all seem awakened, none justified." The door appeared wide open for him, however, and he writes that even at Newcastle the awakening had not been so general. The city clergy turned out to hear him and the chief persons of the town showed unexpected favor; he was astonished at the vast congregations, but found himself thinking, "How few will own God's messengers when the stream turns?" As soon as he began to gather converts he prepared for the usual outbreaks of hostility. "Hitherto," he says, "they seemed asleep; but the witnesses of Jesus are rising to rouse them."

Hardly had Charles Wesley left Ireland when a storm of persecution burst upon the Methodists of Cork. A strolling ballad singer, Nicholas Butler, dressed in a parson's gown and bands, with a Bible in one hand and a collection of lampooning rhymes in the other, paraded the streets, singing and peddling the slanders against the Methodists. The mob greeted him as a leader and fell upon the poor Methodists

with the fury of wild beasts, stoning and beating them without mercy. Many were seriously wounded. They were driven out of their chapel by the sheriffs and were assailed in the streets, the authorities approving. The mayor said to a merchant, in the hearing of the rabble: "It is your own fault, for entertaining these preachers. If you will turn them out of your house, I will engage there will be no more harm done; but if you will not turn them out, you must take what you will get."

"This is fine usage under a Protestant government," said Daniel Sullivan. "If I had a priest saying mass in every room of it, my house would not be touched."

"The priests," replied the mayor, "are to be tolerated, but you are not."

The mob gave a huzza, and threw stones faster than before. At the next Cork Assizes twenty-eight presentments were made against the rioters, but were thrown out by the grand jury. This jury made a "memorable presentment," still on the city records, that "we find and present Charles Wesley to be a person of ill fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of his majesty's peace, and we pray that he may be transported."

A new face was given the affair at the Lent Assize, when the trial of the indicted preachers as vagabonds was attempted, with Butler, a self-confessed vagabond, as chief witness. The indignant judge declared it an insult to the court to bring such a case before him, and the preachers were liberated.

The notorious Butler lost an arm in a riot, and fled to Dublin, where he dragged out the remainder of his life in misery. The man who had cried, "Five pounds for the head of a Swaddler!" was kept from starving by the Dublin Methodists.



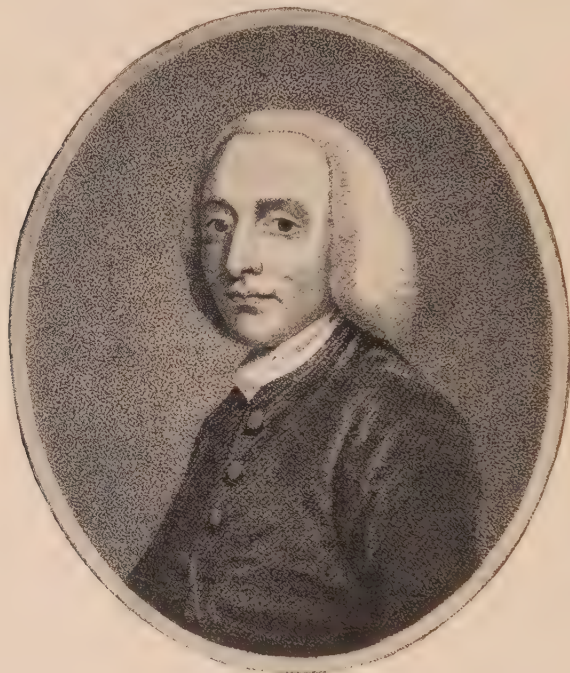
CHAPTER LXXVII

An Irish Scholar, Apostle, and Saint

“THAT BLESSED MAN, THOMAS WALSH.”—A CONVERT FROM ROMANISM.
—“SPEAK TO THEM IN IRISH.”—FROM THE STUDY TO THE SYNAGOGUE.—SERAPHIC SAINTLINESS.

THE two most distinguished and typical “saints” of early Methodism were born outside of England. John Fletcher was a Swiss, and “that blessed man, Thomas Walsh,” as Wesley called him, was an Irishman, born at Ballylinn, about ten miles from Limerick, in 1730. He was a carpenter’s son, taught to speak the native tongue, and to hold the creed of his parents, who were rigid Roman Catholics. Southey says that his life “might alone convince a Catholic that saints are to be found in other communions as well as in the Church of Rome. . . . As a Romanist he might have retired to a cell or a hermitage, contented with securing his own salvation by perpetual austerity and prayer and a course of continual self-tormenting. But he could not have been more dead to the world nor more entirely possessed by a devotional spirit.” But Walsh’s saintliness was not thus buried in “a dark monastic cell,” and in his character we find continued the same seraphic piety and practical philanthropy which we see in Fletcher.

When he was eight years old he learned English, and was taught the rudiments of Latin by his brother. He then went to Limerick, to gain skill in writing and such branches of literature as would fit him to be a schoolmaster, until about his nineteenth year, when he "set up" a school for himself.



FROM A COPPERPLATE BY RIDLEY.

THOMAS WALSH.

The perpetual repetition of the Lord's Prayer and Ave Maria in Irish and the 130th psalm in Latin, with various prayers, did not satisfy his sensitive soul. An act of stubbornness drew from his mother the reproach, "You have grieved me." "It went like an arrow through my heart," he says; and he felt the force of the fifth commandment, which he calls the "very firmament and band even of commonwealths." He

was convinced that he rightly loved neither his parents nor his God. He went often to mass; his confessor enjoined “more prayers,” and to this he added frequent fasts. In anguish of spirit he struck himself against the earth, felt driven by the devil, and cried out for light.

When eighteen, on the advice of his brother, who had become a Protestant, and also of Philip Geier, one of the Palatine Methodist leaders, he read the Bible. Soon he attended Protestant services. On the parade ground at Limerick, in 1749, he heard Robert Swindells, one of Wesley’s most devoted lay itinerants, preach on “Come unto me, all ye that labor,” and he saw a path to peace. He joined the Methodist society at Newmarket “in order to be more fully instructed in the way,” and while the brethren were praying he received “the witness of the Spirit.” He was soon appointed leader of a class, and was taunted as a “turncoat and a Methodist.” He discovered, to his surprise, that some “Protestants as well as papists have naturally a spirit of calumny and persecution . . . and that many who spoke against the pope and the Inquisition were themselves in reality of the same spirit.”

He opened his heart to John Wesley, who sent him the following characteristic note:

MY DEAR BROTHER: It is hard to judge what God has called you to till trial is made. Therefore, when you have an opportunity, you may go to Shronil and spend two or three days with the people there. Speak to them in Irish.

There is an old saying in Ireland, “When you plead for your life plead in Irish.” Acting on Wesley’s wise advice, Walsh walked thirty miles to preach his first sermon in his mother tongue. Some of his hearers contradicted, some mocked, but many wept. Every day for some weeks he

preached at Limerick, and then went like a flame of fire through Leinster and Connaught. His pathetic Irish tongue won him a hearing from many poor Irish Catholics, who smote upon their breasts and called upon the Virgin with

sobbing voices, and declared themselves ready to follow him as a saint over the world! One who had saved his money to give to a priest, for masses when he should be dead, brought it to Walsh that he might pray his soul out of purgatory, and was astonished when the Methodist told him that only the blood of Christ could cleanse from sin.



DRAWN BY W. P. SNYDER.

A BAREFOOT LASS.

On his way to Roscrea he was met by seventy men armed with clubs. He told them that he came not to discuss opinions, but to preach against all sin. They insisted that he should swear not

to come that way again, and on his refusal hurried him to a well. His courageous bearing won him friends, the parish minister among them. The mob took him to an inn, brought him out again, and finally hurried him on horseback out of the town. He raised his hat and prayed for them, and left "in peace of conscience and serenity of mind." He returned later, and Methodism was then planted in Roscrea.

At Bandon, near Cork, he stood upon a table under a spreading tree, and the sergeants, sent to arrest him, stood still to hear him preach from Job xxi, 3: "Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on." He was

taken to prison, but the whole town had been impressed by his character and eloquence, and he preached from the grated window to the listening crowd. They brought him bedding and provisions, and the next day he was released.

Some of the priests grew alarmed, and one at Clonmel told the people that Walsh had been a priest's servant, and having stolen his master's books, had by that means learned his wonderful art of preaching. At Cork another declared, "As for that Walsh, who had some time before turned heretic and went about preaching, he had been dead long ago, and he who then preached in this manner was the devil in his shape."

But Walsh went on his way, over mountains, meadows, highways; and in the streets, the cabins of the poor, in prisons and in ships, proclaimed his message with such power that Wesley said: "Wherever he preached, the word, whether in English or Irish, was sharper than a two-edged sword. I do not remember ever to have known a preacher who in so few years as he remained on earth was an instrument of converting so many sinners." When English failed he turned to Irish. To one swearing foe, who was threatening to take his life, he uttered a rebuke in Irish, and the startled man, with broken heart, cried out, "Why did you not so speak to me in the beginning?"

Wesley invited him to London in 1753, where he did much



DRAWN BY W. P. SNYDER.

A SWEEPER.

good among his countrymen, who flocked to hear him at Short's Garden. "Such a sluice of divine oratory," says his friend Morgan, "ran through the whole of his language as is rarely to be met with," and the glow of his soul and the energy of his spirit are said to have been indescribable. At West Street Chapel, where he often preached during the last two years of his ministry in London, he found a people well prepared to hear his discourses on the deep things of God. His sermons were seldom less than an hour long, but they were so varied, so rich in exposition of Scripture, and so thrilling in their pathos, that the people never grew weary. A strong will, and "one life to live," urged him to labor beyond his strength. He met the children of the congregation weekly, visited from house to house, and uttered passing words which fastened like nails in a sure place.

He was a hard student, rising at four and reading everywhere, studying while others talked, and passing from his pulpit to his study with unwearied brain. In 1755 he began to read Hebrew, and this became a passion with him. "O truly laudable and worthy study!" he exclaims; "whereby a man is enabled to converse with God, with holy angels, with patriarchs, and with prophets, and clearly to unfold to men the mind of God." Wesley says he was the finest Hebrew scholar he ever met. He was a living concordance, and could tell how often any word was found in the Hebrew Bible and what it meant. He often attended the synagogues and conversed with the Jews, for which these studies gave him special fitness. He passed through the London streets absorbed in thought and indifferent to the uproar. He loved to gaze at night upon the starry sky, for there, he said, he found infinity.

He blended worship with study, for he held that he could

not attain full knowledge without heavenly help. "Turning his face to the wall and lifting up his heart and countenance to heaven, with his arms clasped about his breast, he would stand for some time before the Lord in solemn recollection." His constant cry was: "I fain would rest in Thee! I thirst for the divine life. I pray for the spirit of illumination. I



DRAWN BY W. P. SNYDER.

IRISH PEASANT WOMEN.

cast my soul upon Jesus Christ, the God of glory and the Redeemer of the world. I desire to be conformable unto him; his friend, servant, disciple, and sacrifice!" Sometimes, those who knew him said, his soul seemed absorbed in God, and from the serenity and "something resembling splendor which appeared in his countenance, and in all his gestures afterward, it might easily be discovered what he had been about." He entered upon the work of the ministry with trembling humility and awe. "Lord Jesus!" he

prayed, "I lay my soul at thy feet, to be taught and governed by thee. Take the veil from the mystery and show me the truth as it is in thyself. Be thou my sun and star by day and by night."

Walsh was a young man of twenty when he began his ministry, and he was only twenty-eight when he died. "The sword was too sharp for the scabbard." At twenty-five he looked like a man of forty. Stevens says that with the exception of his larger and more voluminous eye his portrait resembled that of Jonathan Edwards, whom he was not unlike in other respects. His friends protested in vain against his exhausting labors, and Wesley appears to have been unable to secure his obedience to his own rules of health, although they traveled together in Ireland and saw much of each other in London, where Walsh labored at three different periods, residing in Wesley's own house. He differed from the Wesleys, as we have seen, in his opinion that the time had come for the Methodists to receive the sacraments from the hands of their own preachers; but he ceased to administer them himself in order to secure peace. We shall find John Wesley coming round to Walsh's view. Wesley seems to have regarded him with a feeling akin to reverence. In a letter to his brother Charles he says, "I love, admire, and honor him."

This remarkable scholar saint suffered a mysterious eclipse of faith for a few months before he died. He once heard Fletcher express the opinion, in a sermon, that some comparatively weak believers might die most cheerfully, and that some strong ones, for the purification of their faith or for inscrutable reasons, might have severe conflicts. Walsh opposed this opinion at the time, at a meeting of the bands. But he proved only too painfully that Fletcher was right.

"His great soul," says his friend Morgan, "lay thus as it were in ruins for some time, and poured out many a heavy groan and speechless tear from an oppressed heart and dying body." But at the last moment the clouds broke, and Walsh came forth from the terrible mental struggle with the rapturous exclamation: "He is come! He is come! My beloved is mine and I am his; his forever!"



CHAPTER LXXVIII

Persecuting Protestants and Rampant Romanists

THE CURSE OF A DEAD PROTESTANTISM.—CATHOLIC METHODISM AND ROMAN CATHOLICISM.—THE FIRST IRISH CONFERENCE.—THE NORTHERN "ROUND."—WESLEY HANGED IN EFFIGY.—A CHILD-CHAMPION AT WATERFORD.

THE magistrate and grand jury at Cork, who practically abetted the Romanist rioters in their attacks on the Methodists, were Protestants. In Ireland, as in England, malicious rumors deepened the prejudice against Methodism. At Bandon a gentlewoman asked John Wesley if what Dr. B. had said were true: that he and his brother had been expelled from Oxford University; that there were no Methodists left in England, and that it was all Jesuitism at bottom. At Rathcormick Wesley writes: "I was a little surprised at the acuteness of a gentleman here, who, in conversation with Colonel Barry about late occurrences, said he had heard there was a people rising up who placed all religion in wearing long whiskers; and seriously asked whether these were not the same who were called Methodists."

Wesley states that, while many of the Methodist converts had been Roman Catholics, the number would have been far greater had not the Protestant as well as the popish priests hindered them. "The dead Protestantism of the land was

his chief obstacle." "O what a harvest might be in Ireland did not the poor Protestants hate Christianity worse than either popery or heathenism!"

The charitable and discriminating spirit in which the Wesleys and their helpers dealt with Roman Catholics, while they held doctrines utterly destructive of Romanism, also roused the prejudices of formal Protestants who took no spiritual interest whatever in their Romish neighbors. Thomas Walsh, for instance, said of Romanists: "I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, though not according unto knowledge. Many of them love justice, mercy, and truth; and may, notwithstanding many errors in sentiment and therefore in practice, since as God's majesty so is his mercy, be dealt with accordingly." "There have been, doubtless, and still are among them . . . persons devoted to the service of Jesus Christ according as their light and opportunities admit. And, in reality, whatever opinions people may hold, they are most approved by God whose temper and behavior correspond with the model of his holy word." He did not, however, consider this any justification "of the unscriptural tenets, such as are many of the Church of Rome," which led him to leave that Church. "If I had never known the truth of the Scriptures concerning the way of salvation . . . then I might possibly have been saved in her communion, the merciful God making allowance for my invincible ignorance. But I freely profess that now, since God hath enlightened my mind and given me to see the truth as it is in Jesus, if I had still continued a member of the Church of Rome, I could not have been saved. With regard to others I say nothing; I know that every man must bear his own burden, and give an account of himself to God. . . . But love and tender compassion for their souls constrained me to pour out a prayer to

God in their behalf: 'All souls' are thine, O Lord God, and thou wilt all to come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. For this end thou didst give thy only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life. I beseech thee, O eternal God, show thy tender mercies upon those poor souls who have been long deluded by "the god of this world," the pope, and his clergy. Jesus, thou Lover of souls and Friend of sinners, send to them thy light and thy truth, that they may lead them. O let thy bowels yearn over them, and call those straying sheep, now perishing for lack of knowledge, to the light of thy word, which is able to make them wise to salvation, through faith which is in thee.'"

This apologia by a convert from Romanism of the mental caliber and saintliness of Thomas Walsh is worthy of a permanent place in Methodist literature, and the touching prayer might well be included in every Protestant liturgy. It is of special importance, as it represents the Methodist attitude toward those who are swayed by dogmas destructive of all that Methodists hold most dear in evangelical truth.

The preachers seem to have confined their labors at first to the middle and southern parts of Ireland; perhaps on Wesley's principle of going "first to those who need you most," as Protestantism was strongest in the north. An Irish historian tells us that in 1749 all Ireland was one circuit, with John Haughton and Jonathan Reeves as "assistants," or superintendents; and it was probably during this year that the north was first visited by the Methodist preachers.

In 1752 Ireland was divided into six "rounds," or circuits: Dublin, Athlone, Cork, Limerick, Wexford, including Waterford, and "the north," which included the entire province of Ulster. From the Minutes of the first Irish Con-

ference, held in Limerick, August 14 and 15, 1752, we find that of twelve preachers then laboring in Ireland six—Thomas Walsh, Joseph Cownley, Robert Swindells, Thomas Kead, John Fenwick, and John Edwards—were appointed to spend each so many months on the “northern round” during the year. Newry seems to have been the headquarters of the “northern round” at this early period, from which all the adjacent towns and populous villages were visited. In Armagh, Terryhugan, which Mr. Wesley calls “the mother church of these parts,” and other parts of the present Portadown Circuit, a considerable amount of success was realized at a very early date; and the presumption is that these earnest, enterprising men, burning with love to Christ and to souls, visited Lisburn and Belfast, which even then was the principal town in Ulster, with thirty thousand inhabitants. But as they met with no particular encouragement, and failed to form a society, we have no records, and hence cannot trace them.

In 1753 Ireland is entered as one circuit, No. 12, with six “rounds,” or subdivisions, and nine preachers, the greater number of whom were duly appointed to labor in “the north,” as before. In 1755 we meet with the same arrangement; “the north” being statedly visited by Walsh, Cownley, Swindells, and many others among the choicest spirits of the itinerancy of that day.

While there is no room for doubt that Walsh and many of his fellow-laborers unfurled the Methodist banner in Belfast prior to Wesley’s first visit to the north, we have no record to that effect; and hence it can never be known to which of that noble band belongs the honor of having introduced Methodism into the town. But it was probably Thomas Walsh, as he spent a large portion of his time on “the north-

ern round," and had his full share of the evangelistic spirit. In 1756 we find him in Newtownards, where he was near being strangled in a riot while preaching on the Lord's day.



MAP OF IRELAND IN WESLEY'S DAY.

Let us follow John Wesley in his itinerancy and obtain from his Journals passing glimpses of the Ireland of his day.

On his second visit to Cork, in 1750, where he was accompanied by Christopher Hopper, riots broke out with renewed

violence. He went to Bandon to preach, but the Cork mob followed him and hung him in effigy. His best guardians were the soldiers, many of whom became staunch Methodists, and the mob became more afraid of them than of the mayor, to whom Wesley wrote a letter closing with these words: “I fear God and honor the king. I earnestly desire to be at peace with all men. I have not willingly given any offense either to the magistrates, the clergy, or any of the inhabitants of the city of Cork; neither do I desire anything of them but to be treated (I will not say as a clergyman, a gentleman, or a Christian) with such justice and humanity as are due to a Jew, a Turk, or a pagan.”

The day came (in 1787) when Wesley was received at the Mansion House by the mayor and “the chief of the city, being no longer bitter enemies, but cordial friends.” Methodism was firmly planted, a large chapel built, and Wesley even feared, only five years from the date of the riots, that Cork might prove “the Capua of the preachers.”

We find him in Dublin in 1752 preaching at five in the morning, and at midday attending the service at St. Patrick’s, where he is shocked at the “careless and indecent behavior of the congregation.” At Kinsale he preaches in a grander cathedral. On the hill above the fort was a deep hollow capable of containing three thousand people. On one side the soldiers cut with their swords a ledge of earth which served as a pulpit, from which Wesley preached to a vast multitude who sat on the grass.

He and Christopher Hopper had attempted to reach Waterford in 1750, but the ferryman, fearing the mob which the notorious Butler had gathered, would not take them across the Graimah Ferry. So he came again two years later, heard Thomas Walsh preach on market day in Irish,

and preached, himself, to a shouting, cursing crowd at the courthouse. Eleven years later he again faced the rioters in this city, and an interesting incident is related in the diary of Samuel Wood, a preacher of a later date: "I shall never forget the feelings excited within me when I was hardly five



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

FROM A WOODCUT.

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL.

years old, in April, 1773, when I saw that venerable servant of God, the Rev. John Wesley, shamefully treated by a rude and desperate mob while he was preaching in the Bowling Green, Waterford. I felt all my blood rushing into my face. I stood at the table upon which Mr. Wesley was standing; and while I heard the shouting of the crowd, and saw the dead animals and cabbage stalks flying around his hoary head, I was filled with pity and horror. I wished that I were a man. I clinched my little fists. Some person came to re-

move 'the child;' but 'the child' resisted and would not be removed, until a gentleman, afterward well known as Sir John Alcock, rushed forward, took Mr. Wesley in his arms off the table and conveyed him in safety to Mr. Scott's. He [Mr. Wesley] afterward inquired who 'the child' was who so bravely stood by the table. I was brought to him. He put both his hands upon my head and blessed me, in the presence of my mother. Dear Mr. Wesley must have been seriously injured but for the manly intervention of Mr. Alcock. Such was my first sight of, and such my first introduction to, my venerable and much-beloved father and friend, the Rev. John Wesley. This outrage, I afterward learned, was excited and encouraged by a superstitious faction of some mercantile reputation in the city of Waterford, which faction soon melted away, like hail in summer. God visited them suddenly and awfully.

"The next evening Mr. Wesley preached in John Street, 'Sir Charles's Yard,' as it was called in Waterford; and there, before the gate, a wretched vagrant was dressed up in a white shirt and a flaxen wig, placed upon a table, and was singing ribald songs."



CHAPTER LXXIX

The Hibernian Heralds of American Methodism

IRISH CHARACTER AND CUSTOMS.—THE FIRST SOCIETY AT BELFAST.—
A SANCTUARY IN A SLAUGHTERHOUSE.—PHILIP EMBURY'S SCHOOL-
MASTER.—THE PALATINES IN IRELAND.—AMERICA'S DEBT TO
HIBERNIA AND GERMANY.

WESLEY traversed Ireland with a keen eye to every clue to the character of its people. At Rathcormick he witnessed a typical Irish country scene. A vast crowd had followed for a funeral: "I was exceedingly shocked at the Irish howl which followed. It was not a song, but a dismal, inarticulate yell, set up at the grave by four shrill-voiced women hired for the purpose. But I saw not one that shed a tear; for that, it seems, was not in their bargain." In spite of this custom of professional mourning Wesley was convinced that the Irish were "an immeasurably loving people," and he regarded honesty as a prominent trait in their character. He was pleasantly surprised at Dublin Quay in 1756, where he had been buying some books, when a young man came to him later to return a guinea which he had left on the counter, and he writes, "Such an instance of honesty I have rarely met with, either in Bristol or London." He was impressed with the good order in Trinity College

Chapel, and remarks, "I never saw so much decency at any chapel in Oxford; no, not even in Lincoln College." He finds that Irish doctors, as well as English, are absurdly fond of bleeding, and undertakes himself to cure a pleurisy with a brimstone plaster, with wonderful success. He is astonished at the light-hearted way in which a populace hear of a coming French invasion, of which they "have no more apprehension than of being swallowed up by the sea; everyone being absolutely assured that the French dare not attempt any such thing." He was saddened by the sight of many ruined towns, and as he rode through Adair noted that this "once strong and flourishing town was now without walls and almost without inhabitants—only a few poor huts remain." He found the County of Galway, in 1758, "fruitful and pleasant," and the town "old and not ill-built, most of the houses being of stone and several stories high. It is encompassed with an old, bad wall, and is in no posture of defense, either toward the land or sea. Such is the supine negligence of both English and Irish."

He was struck with the superiority of Ulster, in 1756, to the south and west. "The ground," he writes, "was cultivated just as in England, and the cottages not only neat, but with doors, chimneys, and windows. Newry, the first town we came to (allowing for the size), is built much after the manner of Liverpool." Belfast he thought as large as Limerick, but "far cleaner and pleasanter."

In 1760 Wesley was again in Belfast, preaching in the market place "to a people who care for none of these things." On May Day he preached on a tombstone near the Church of Moira to a great and attentive crowd. The voice of the preacher could be almost heard at the stately house of the Earl of Moira, who had as his guest General Flaubert,

the commander of the French troops at Carrickfergus. At Newmarket, a German settlement, the poor settlers, with all their diligence and frugality, could not procure even the coarsest food and the meanest raiment. At Limerick he preached to an enormous crowd, and next day at Shronil, "near a great house which a gentleman built many years ago; but he cannot yet afford to finish it, having only thirty thousand a year and some hundred thousand in ready money!

The beggars but a common lot deplore,
The rich-poor man's emphatically poor."

In 1762 he again visited Ireland, and after a satisfactory visit to his "classes" in Dublin he came to Carrickfergus, where a storm of rain kept away "the delicate and curious" hearers, and thence to Belfast. He writes: "Where to preach in Belfast I did not know. It was too wet to preach abroad, and a dancing master was busily employed in the upper part of the market house, till, at twelve, the sovereign [mayor] put him out by holding his court there. While he was above I began below, to a very serious and attentive audience. But they were all poor—the rich of Belfast 'cared for none of these things.'"

The society was formed in Belfast probably in 1763, and consisted of a handful of very poor people. Next year they secured an old slaughterhouse, and in this humble sanctuary the Methodist preachers ministered the word of life. It was here that William Black, of Malone (afterward of Lisburn), first heard them. He was invited by his companions to attend a meeting. He and they went, more, however, to gratify curiosity than for edification. Two soldiers conducted the meeting; the power of God accompanied the word. Mr. Black became deeply convinced of sin, and resolved to aban-

don evil company. On their way home his companions derided the meeting. He asked them, "Are you not ashamed to mock, coming out of the house of God?" They replied, "That is no house of God, but an old slaughterhouse." He said, "Be that as it may, it was the house of God to me."

The "old slaughterhouse" was the only Methodist place of worship for more than twenty-five years, when it was superseded by a "little" house in a stable lane at the back of Donegal Place, to which Wesley refers in the account of his last visit, in his eighty-sixth year. A large chapel in Donegal Square was opened seventeen years later, and Belfast Methodism rapidly advanced from that time.

At the first Irish Conference, held at Limerick in 1752, one of the preachers who was admitted represented a people who were destined to link Irish with American Methodism. Philip Geier has been mentioned as the class leader by whom Thomas Walsh was partly enlightened. He was schoolmaster at Ballingran, and among his pupils was Philip Embury, who became one of the founders of American Methodism. Philip Geier was appointed preacher to the German colony of Palatines in the County of Limerick. He still kept his school, and the people loved him, supplying him with oatmeal, bacon, and potatoes, so that Philip, if not rich, was not in want. "It is a remarkable fact," says the Irish Evangelist of 1860, "that after the lapse of a hundred years the name of Philip Geier is as fresh in Ballingran as it ever was, for there even papists as well as Protestants are accustomed to salute the Methodist minister as he jogs along on his circuit horse, and to say, 'There goes Philip Geier, who drove the devil out of Ballingran.'" In May, 1778, Wesley writes: "Two months ago good Philip Geier fell asleep, one of the Palatines who came over and settled in Ireland be-

tween sixty and seventy years` ago. He was a father both to this [Newmarket] and the other German societies."

When Louis XIV, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, sent his troops to devastate the Palatinate on the Rhine he little reckoned that his relentless cruelty to the Protestant population would assist in the planting of the most progressive of all the forms of Protestantism in a new home of liberty beyond the Atlantic. His troops, under Turenne, laid waste the country, and from the towers of Mannheim, the capital, the Elector Palatine saw two cities and twenty-five villages burning at once. The sympathy of Protestant England was aroused. Queen Anne sent ships in which six thousand were brought to England. They were temporarily encamped and fed on Camberwell and Blackheath commons. Thousands more soon followed them. Three thousand were sent by the British government to the American colonies in 1710. When Wesley visited Ireland he found more than a hundred families settled near Rathkeale, in the County of Limerick. Ferrer, in his History of Limerick, describes them as industrious, better fed and clothed than most of the Irish peasantry, and improving their small farms by skillful tillage. In a list of those who settled on Lord Southwell's estates Stevens finds the "names of Embury, Heck, Ruckle, Switzer, Geier, and others associated with the original Methodists of New York."

Deprived of pastors for nearly half a century, and neglecting Christian worship, these Teutonic settlers degenerated and became drunken and profane. But the Methodist itinerants visited them, a blessed reformation resulted, and when Wesley came in 1756 he says he "found much life among this plain, artless, serious people. The whole town came together in the evening and praised God." At the society

meeting there were fervent and intelligent responses. In 1758 he says he preached in a large chapel they had erected in Court Mattress. "So did God provide for these poor strangers who for fifty years had none who cared for their souls." Later he declares that three such towns as Court Mattress, Killiheen, and Ballingran were hardly to be found anywhere else in Ireland or England. There were no cursing, no Sabbath-breaking, no drunkenness, no alehouse in any of them. They had become "a serious, thinking people," and their diligence had "turned all their land into a garden." "How will these poor foreigners rise up in the judgment against those who are round about them!"

Philip Embury was about twenty-four years of age when he first saw Wesley, in 1752. This was also the year of his conversion, and a fragment of the record of this blessed event, in his own handwriting, is reproduced in a later volume. The story of his life belongs to transatlantic history, but an Irish historian, Dr. Crook, thus describes the scene on the quay of Limerick, in the spring of 1760, where a pilgrim band had gathered to embark for America:

"At that time emigration was not so common an occurrence as it is now, and the excitement connected with their departure was intense. The emigrants were Palatines from Ballingran, and were accompanied to the vessel's side by crowds of their companions and friends, some of whom had come sixteen miles to say 'farewell' for the last time. One of those about to leave—a young man with a thoughtful look and resolute bearing—is evidently the leader of the party, and a more than ordinary pang is felt by many as they bid him farewell. He had been one of the first fruits of his countrymen to Christ, had been the leader of the infant Church, and in their humble chapel had often ministered to

them the word of life. He is surrounded by his spiritual children and friends, who are anxious to have some parting words of counsel and instruction. He enters the vessel, and from its side once more breaks among them the bread of life. And now the last prayer is offered; they embrace each other; the vessel begins to move. As she recedes uplifted hands and uplifted hearts attest what all felt. But none of all that vast multitude felt more, probably, than that young man. His name is Philip Embury. . . . Yet who among the crowd that saw them leave could have thought that two of that little band were destined, in the mysterious providence of God, to influence for good countless myriads, and that their names should live as long as the sun and moon endure? Yet so it was. That vessel contained Philip Embury and Barbara Heck."



CHAPTER LXXX

Wesley in Scotland

DRAGOONS AS PIONEER METHODISTS.—A RISING AMERICAN MISSIONARY.—WESLEY AT EDINBURGH, "AULD REEKIE."—IN GLASGOW AND ABERDEEN.—GLIMPSES OF SCOTCH CHARACTER.—"I LOVE GOOD MEN OF EVERY CHURCH."—AN ALARMING ADVENTURE.

IT was in the old town of Dunbar—twenty-nine miles east of Edinburgh, famous in British history for many a siege and as the scene of one of Cromwell's greatest victories—that one of Wesley's earliest missionaries to America, Thomas Rankin, was born. Here also some Methodist dragoons of John Haime's regiment formed the first Methodist society in Scotland. These soldiers also commenced a society at Musselburgh, six miles from Edinburgh.

When Thomas Rankin was an inquiring youth of seventeen he was led by curiosity to attend the Dunbar meeting, and in true Scotch fashion debated the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit. He heard a fellow Scot, William Darney, and others preach in a style that startled but did not convince him. Then he heard Whitefield in the Orphan House yard, Edinburgh, and "had a discovery of the unsearchable riches of the grace of God." There was great joy in the society at Dunbar when he sent the good news, but others said he was "religiously mad."

Mercantile business sent him to Charleston, South Carolina, an experience which prepared him for future travel on a higher mission. On his return he heard that Wesley had been visiting the newly formed Scotch societies.



DRAWN BY G. W. PICKNELL.

AFTER PHOTOGRAPHS.

DUNBAR.

The Wesleyan chapel.

The fishers' quarter.

Wesley first visited Scotland in 1751, at the entreaty of his friend Colonel Gallatin, who was quartered at Musselburgh. Moore tells us that Whitefield had urged him not to go, saying that he would have "nothing to do but to dispute from morning to night." Wesley, however, went his way, resolv-

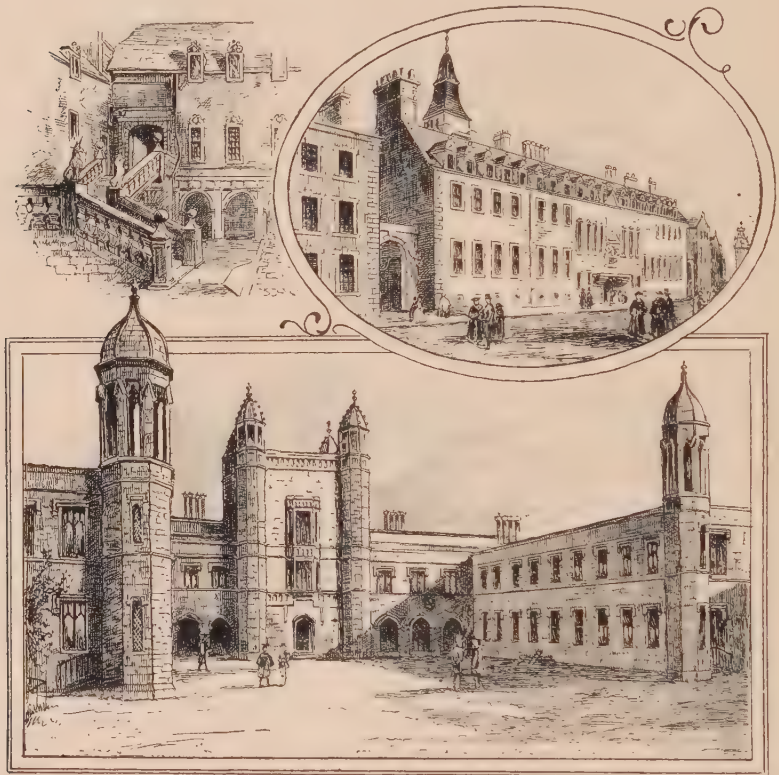
ing to avoid controversy. His companion was Christopher Hopper, who had been among his brother's curious hearers at Tanfield Cross, Newcastle. - At Musselburgh a large congregation "remained as statues from the beginning of the sermon to the end," though they were said to be grossly inattentive when in their own kirk.

At Edinburgh Wesley says he "used great plainness of speech toward them, and they all received it in love; so that the prejudice which the devil had been several years planting was torn up by the roots in one hour. After preaching, one of the bailies of the town, with one of the elders of the kirk, came to me and begged I would stay with them a while, if it were but two or three days, and they would fit up a far larger place than the school and prepare seats for the congregation. Had not my time been fixed, I should gladly have complied."

Wesley visited Scotland again in 1753, when Dr. Gillies, of Glasgow, courteously offered him his pulpit. "Surely," said Wesley, "with God nothing is impossible! Who would have believed, five and twenty years ago, either that the minister would have desired it or that I should consent to preach in a Scotch kirk!" He preached also in the open air to crowds, who stood listening even in the rain. Hopeful at first, he soon learned that respectful attention covered much indifference, or difference of opinion; but he found those who joined the society were reliable in character. "Steadiness, indeed," says Moore, "he looked for in the people of North Britain."

At Aberdeen, in 1761, Wesley preached to a vast crowd in the college close, and about twenty were added to the society. Before noon on Monday morning, he says, "twenty more came to me desiring to cast in their lot with us;" and as he

was looking at the King's College, shortly after, one of a large party of ladies and gentlemen came to him and said, "We came last night to the college close, but could not hear, and should be extremely obliged if you would give us a short



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

AFTER PRINTS.

VIEWS IN ABERDEEN.

The college staircase.

The college.

Marischal College, where Wesley preached, 1761.

discourse here." "I knew not," says Wesley, "what God might have to do, and so began without delay on 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.' I believe the word was not lost—it fell as dew on the tender grass. In the

afternoon I was walking in the library of the Marischal College when the principal and the divinity professor came to me, and the latter invited me to his lodgings, where I spent an hour very agreeably. In the evening the eagerness of the people made them ready to trample each other under foot. It was some time before they were still enough to hear, but then they devoured every word.” In the evening the professors and magistrates attended the service. Wesley left ninety members in the society.

He rode twenty miles to visit Sir Archibald Grant, and noted with pleasure the agricultural improvements which he was then introducing into Scotland. The next day he rode sixty-four miles, the day after sixty-six more, and reaching Edinburgh on Saturday, admits “I was tired!” Nevertheless, he preached on Sunday “in our room, morning and evening, even to the rich and honorable. And I bear them witness,” he adds, “they will endure plain dealing, whether they profit by it or not.” His account of the city of that day is characteristic: “The situation of the city, on a hill shelving down on both sides, as well as to the east, with the stately castle upon a craggy rock on the west, is inexpressibly fine. And the main street, so broad and finely paved, with the lofty houses on either hand (many of them seven or eight stories high), is far beyond any in Great Britain. But how can it be suffered that all manner of filth should still be thrown even into this street continually? Where are the magistracy, the gentry, the nobility of the land? Have they no concern for the honor of their nation? How long shall the capital city of Scotland, yea, and the chief street of it, stink worse than a common sewer? Will no lover of his country, or of decency and common sense, find a remedy for this?”

During two later visits to Edinburgh we find him preach-

ing in the High School yard and on Calton Hill, until, in 1766, he reports a service in "the new room, a large and commodious building."

His summary of what he said at Dundee in answer to objections to Methodist work in Scotland, in 1766, is so im-



DRAWN BY G. WILLARD BONTE.

FROM AN OLD PRINT.

EDINBURGH HIGH SCHOOL.

The yard was one of John Wesley's preaching places.

portant that it must be given in full. He writes: "The sum of what I spoke was this: 'I love plain dealing. Do not you? I will use it now. Bear with me. I hang out no false colors; but show you all I am, all I intend, all I do. I am a member of the Church of England; but I love good men of every Church. My ground is the Bible. Yea, I am a Bible-bigot. I follow it in all things, both great and small. Therefore I always use a short private prayer when I attend the public service of God. Do not you? Why do you not? Is not this according to the Bible? I stand whenever I sing the praise of God in public. Does not the Bible give you plain prece-

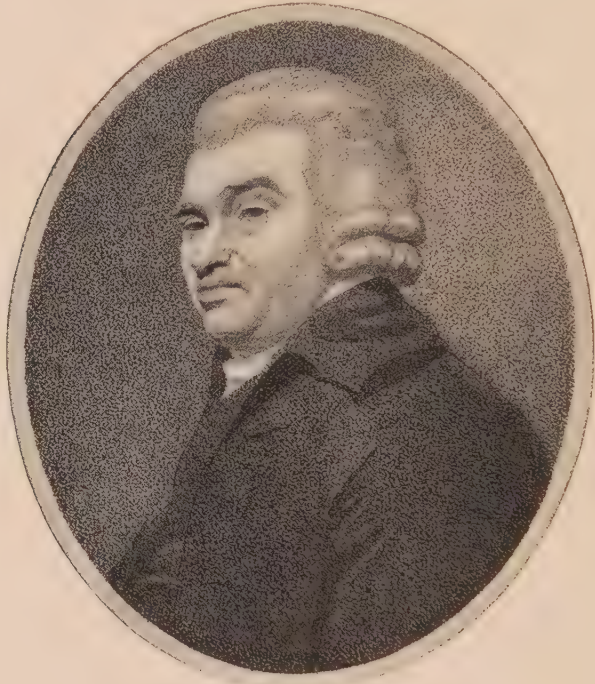
dents for this? I always kneel before the Lord my Maker when I pray in public. I generally use the Lord's Prayer, because Christ has taught me when I pray to say . . . I advise every preacher connected with me, whether in England or Scotland, herein to tread in my steps!" At Dundee he found a society of sixty members.

At Edinburgh again, on the following Sunday morning at five o'clock, he had a larger congregation than he had ever seen before, and he remarks—probably in view of the idea that the Scotch can only be reached by elaborate polemical and profound discourses—"It is scarce possible to speak too plain in England; but it is scarce possible to speak plain enough in Scotland. And if you do not, you lose all your labor; you plow upon the sand." A letter to Wesley by Lady Gardiner, the widow of the Christian soldier who fell at Preston Pans, written in 1763, tells of sinners awakened, formalists with their eyes opened, backsliders recovered, and many saints much edified. She testifies to a remarkable work following the labors of Robert Roberts, who was mighty in the Scriptures, and Thomas Hanby, afterward president of the Conference.

This good work was seriously checked by a pamphlet against Wesley written by James Hervey, mangled and added to by the antinomian Cudworth, and republished with a bitter preface by Erskine. As the result of the calumnies it contained "many," says Hopper, "who have often declared the great profit they have received under our ministry were induced to leave us." "My point," says Wesley at this time, "was still to go straightforward in the work whereto I am called."

Notwithstanding controversial difficulties, and the slow progress of the societies, Wesley was favorably impressed by

the religious seriousness of the Scotch character. On the way to Strathbogie he says: "The whole family at our inn, eleven or twelve in number, gladly joined with us in prayer



FROM A CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE.

ROBERT ROBERTS.

"Mighty in the Scriptures."

at night. Indeed, so they did at every inn where we lodged; for, among all the sins they have imported from England, the Scots have not yet learned, at least not the common people, to scoff at sacred things."

He found the roads much worse than in England, and the inns much better. He had more than one narrow escape from death. Accompanied by Duncan Wright, he attempted

to cross the sands to "Solway Frith before the sea was come in. . . . In ten minutes Duncan Wright was embogged; however, the horse plunged on, and got through. I was inclined to turn back; but Duncan telling me I need only go a little to the left, I did so, and sunk at once to my horse's shoulders. He sprung up twice, and twice sunk again, each time deeper than before. At the third plunge he threw me on one side, and we both made shift to scramble out. I was covered with fine, soft mud from my feet to the crown of my head; yet, blessed be God, not hurt at all. But we could not cross till between seven and eight o'clock. An honest man crossed with us, who went two miles out of his way to guide us over the sands to Skilburness, where we found a little clean house, and passed a comfortable night."

On several occasions he was present as a spectator at the meeting of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland. He was shocked at the behavior of many of the members, and he declares, "Had any preacher behaved so at our Conference, he would have had no more place among us." At Edinburgh many of the ministers attended the services which he held during the session, and he had pleasant intercourse with some of them. Moore tells us that Mr. Wardrobe, minister of Bathgate, preached at Wesley's Chapel at Newcastle, to the no small amazement and displeasure of some of his zealous countrymen. It was not Wesley's fault that his fellowship with many other excellent Scotch ministers was interrupted by the Calvinistic controversy. Of the arduous labors of some of his heroic lay preachers in Scotland we must tell in our next chapter.



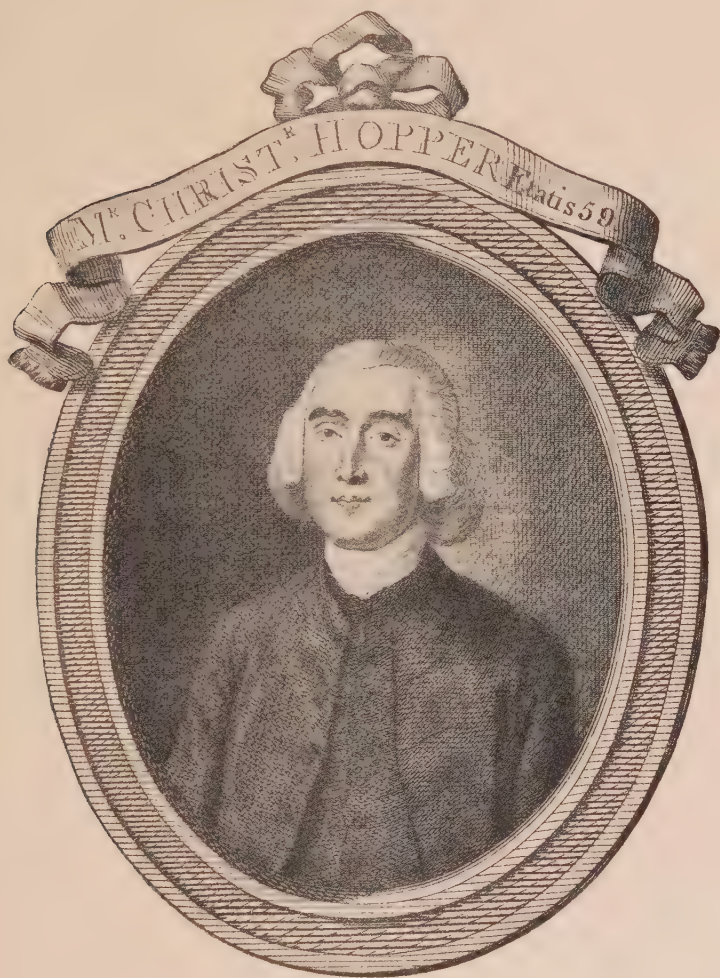
CHAPTER LXXXI

Heroes of the North

THE CONFESSIONS OF CHRISTOPHER.—THOMAS TAYLOR'S FAST DAYS IN SCOTLAND.—COOL AND CANNY SCOTS.—THOMAS HANBY AND THOMAS OLIVERS IN BONNIE DUNDEE.—DUNCAN WRIGHT, THE HIGHLANDER.

CHRISTOPHER HOPPER (1722–1801), Wesley's companion on his first visit to Scotland, was a man of robust body and soul. In his boyhood his overflowing energy found vent in cruel freaks worthy of a little Nero—in hanging dogs, worrying cats, killing birds. He tried to stifle his early religious convictions by enjoying “whatever the devil brought to town or country” in the form of cock-fighting, card playing, racing, and reckless sports of every kind. He was a farmer's son, and his strength, agility, and skill made him famous as a wagoner. He was the best judge of a horse in all the countryside. His restless spirit was ever seeking some new excitement, for, says he, with characteristic vigor, “novelty pleases, whether the man sits on a throne or a dunghill.” But he could not escape from the unseen world. He writes: “The universe appeared as a vault wherein true comfort was entombed, and the sun himself as a lamp to show the gloomy horrors of a guilty mind. . . . At this time I was my own master, and lived without con-

trol. . . . I was not happy, yet I believed there was something that could make me so, but I knew not what it was nor



FROM A CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE.

THE FIRST WESLEYAN ITINERANT PREACHER IN SCOTLAND.

where to find it." He was impressed by Charles Wesley's sermon at Tanfield Cross, Newcastle, but, fearful of the name

of Methodist, he dismissed serious conversation "with a smile and a piece of drollery." At last he determined to be "no longer led by the laughing multitude, nor deluded with the noise of vain tongues." He heard Mr. Reeves preach a plain, pathetic sermon on faith, hope, and love, and experienced what he describes as a glorious and undeniable change. "God, Christ, angels, men, heaven, earth, and the whole creation appeared to me in a new light, and stood related to me in a manner I never knew before. I found love to my God, to his yoke, to his cross, to his saints, and to his friends and enemies." "This is Bible religion, scriptural Christianity; let men call it what they please—a delusion, enthusiasm, Methodism or Mohammedanism—that is nothing to me. Hard names do not change the nature of the thing. I went on my way rejoicing; a wonder to my father's family, to all that knew me, and to myself. . . . Free grace, infinite mercy, boundless love, made the change." Seldom has the Methodist doctrine of conversion been more clearly stated than in this noteworthy confession of Christopher Hopper.

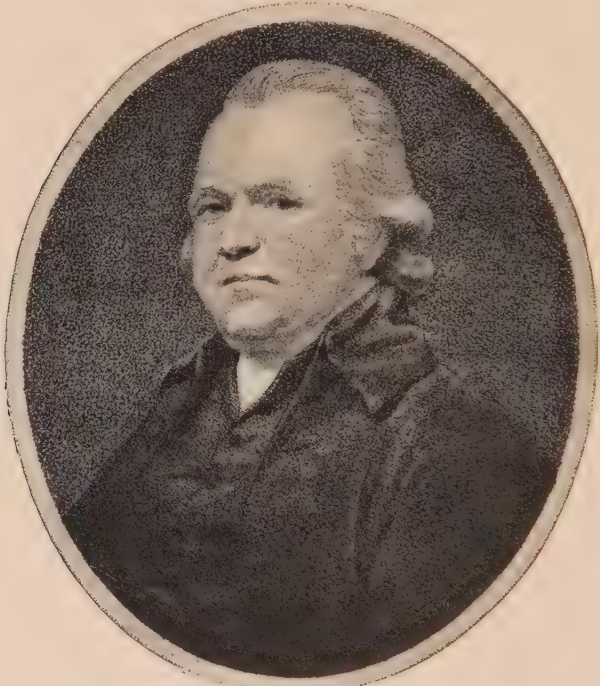
Wesley's keen eye soon sought him out. He was installed class leader at Low Spenn, and began to exhort. Among the first fruits of his zeal was his "poor old mother," a sister, and a brother who had been "a champion in the devil's cause," and many of his old companions. "The fire kindled and the flame spread," and he was soon preaching at High Spenn, Barlow, Woodside, Prudhoe, Newlands, Blanchland, Durham, Sunderland, and many other places. He became an itinerant, as already noted, in 1749. All the North of England still cherishes his memory, and he and Joseph Cownley were the chief founders of Methodism in the Dales.

The pungent and glowing style of Hopper's confessions gives us some idea of his power as a preacher. Whole con-

gregations were sometimes "bowed down before the Lord as the heart of one man" under his sermons. He went with John Wesley to Wales and Ireland, after the Conference at Bristol; accompanied him, as we have seen, to Scotland, and remained to extend the work there. "God blessed his word, and raised up witnesses to testify that he had sent us to the North Britons also." He visited Scotland many times after this. In 1763 we find him living in "a little dark room at Edinburgh, encompassed round with old black walls, disagreeable enough," but finding compensation in fruitful labor. A year later he laid the foundation of "our octagon at Aberdeen," and in 1765 a similar building was commenced at Edinburgh. While it was building he preached to large crowds on Calton Hill, "a large Golgotha, a place of a skull!" but the keen air produced a disorder which he felt for more than three years. He was a careful student and maintained to the last his eminence as a preacher.

Another man of mark was Thomas Taylor, who was sent to Glasgow in 1765. He was "one of those preachers," says Southey, "who tempered zeal with judgment, and who found means during his itinerancy, by the strictest economy of time, to acquire both the Greek and Hebrew languages." He had labored for four years in Wales and Ireland, but this was the most trying appointment he had received. He found at Glasgow no society, no home, no preaching place, no friend. He gave out that he should preach on the green. A table was carried out, and at the appointed time he found two barber's boys and two old women assembled to hear him. "My very soul," he writes, "sunk within me. I had traveled by land and water near six hundred miles to this place, and behold my congregation! None but they who have experienced it can tell what a task it is to stand out in the open

air to preach to nobody, especially in such a place as Glasgow!" Nevertheless, he persevered for a week, and one evening he had a vast congregation, found his table too low even with a chair on it, and mounted a high wall, from which he cried aloud, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the



FROM A CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE.

THOMAS TAYLOR.

The hero of Glasgow Methodism.

dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." The people listened with rapt attention, and he was filled with hope. But when he had done they made a lane for him to pass through their midst while they stood staring at him, but no one said, "Where dwellest thou?"

Cudworth's edition of Hervey's letters had "carried gall and wormwood wherever they came," and Taylor also "found that persons may easily learn to con over Gospel topics—such as original sin, the offices of Christ, and the like—and yet be haughty, self-sufficient sinners." He could not secure a place for winter preaching, and had to sell his horse or starve. He was soon reduced again to short allowance, and to keep up his credit with his landlady he frequently desired her not to prepare anything for dinner, and a little before noon dressed himself, walked out, and came home hungry. She thought he had dined out! Thus he kept many compulsory fast days.

His preaching was now attracting attention, and a minister being needed for a new "kirk of relief," he was invited to take the post. "This was an alluring bait," he says, "considering my present circumstances; a place of £140 per annum, with honor and credit on one hand, and hunger and contempt on the other." But he chose the latter rather than betray the trust which was reposed in him by his brethren.

A canny Scot, seeing he was a poor singer, offered to become his precentor, but at length, to Taylor's surprise, sent in a bill of thirteen shillings. He paid the bill and dismissed the precentor and the Scotch Psalms together. He taught the people Wesley's hymns and tunes, which they soon came to love right well. Then it occurred to the society, now grown to forty members, to inquire how their minister lived. Had he an estate, or supplies from England? The brave fellow told them frankly how matters stood. They were much affected, and thenceforth liberally supplied his wants and provided for the preachers who followed him. He left a society of seventy affectionate people, and in this, and in the advantage which the free use of the college library had

brought him, he recognized a degree of compensation for his hardships.

He was gladly received at Edinburgh, and preached bare-headed in the blazing sun on the castle hill and in the High School yard, as well as in the unfinished chapel. Then he went to Borrowstounness, Linlithgow, Falkirk, and Kilsyth, but, he says, "with little fruit; the Scotch are naturally shy and suspicious of strangers, and anything in religion that appears new, and not agreeing with their established forms, they are exceeding jealous of." He found this especially the case with the class meeting. We shall hear of sturdy Thomas Taylor again as president of the Conference.

The name of Thomas Hanby, says Jabez Marrat, is "hewn deep in the foundations of Dundee Methodism." While he was resolving to "give Dundee a fair trial" the inhabitants were being alarmed by the shining of a bright light on a spot near the town. Without any knowledge of this circumstance he fixed on that very spot for open-air services; consequently a large congregation was drawn together, and his preaching was effectual in reaching the hearts of the people. He remained about three months, and raised a society of near a hundred members.

The first building acquired for Methodist purposes in Dundee was part of what was once the house of the Grey Sisters, or Nuns of St. Clare. The large hall or chapel was used as a preaching room, and where altar lamps had thrown their lights on gorgeous panels, and incense had been kindled, and the idolatrous rites of Rome had been performed, Methodist preachers stood to announce a free and full and immediate salvation, and troubled souls found peace in the one Mediator. Some years since alterations were made in the building, and the workmen came on an antique window one of the

panes of which bore this inscription, made with a diamond: “Eternity! Eternity! Eternity! Thomas Hanby, June 21, 1772.” It was several years before this date that Thomas Hanby had preached on the strangely illumined ground and gathered a little society; but in 1771 he was appointed to Edinburgh, and came the following summer to see his old friends in Dundee, and it was on this visit that he traced his memorial on the window pane: “Eternity! Eternity! Eternity!” How significant of the solemn awe which continually rested on the man! and how fully in harmony with one of his deathbed sayings: “This is great work!” “What is a great work?” was the inquiry. “Dying work is great work!”

The entrance to the old nunnery is still known as “Methodist Close,” but it was not long held as a preachinghouse. In the year 1788 a much more spacious and convenient building, which had been an Episcopal chapel, was purchased, and was the home of the society until the year 1867.

A famous colleague of Thomas Taylor was Thomas Olivers, who, says Jabez Marrat, “having by the help of God cast off the profanities of youth and opened his heart to the Spirit’s transforming power, rose to saintly dignity of life, and, moved to lyric grandeurs of thought rarely attained by mortals, threw out the undying melodies of that hymn

The God of Abraham praise.

“In Dundee,” wrote Thomas Olivers, “I labored comfortably among a quiet, poor, earnest, and happy people. Nor shall I ever forget the last sermon I preached in that town; such liberty I never felt before or since. I had such an absolute command of my ideas, language, voice, and gesture that I could say what I would, also in what manner I pleased.

What good, if any, was then done, I know not now, but shall know another day."

We can only think of the sermon preached in that hour of enlargement and gracious visitation from on high as partaking the qualities of his great hymn: a mighty outburst of evangelical thought, glowing with imagery snatched from the Apocalypse, and suggesting to the hearers immeasurable visions of the triumphs of Immanuel and the final glories of the Church; and we imagine the preacher's voice to have swelled and softened into alternate sublimity and pathos such as we hear in the tune to which he wedded his own immortal strain.

A Scotch Highlander who did good work among his countrymen was Duncan Wright. Converted while a soldier, in Ireland, he entered the itinerancy at Wesley's desire, recovered his early knowledge of Erse, and in 1769 traveled through the Highlands, preaching from town to town two and three times a day, and once at least in the open air. "Though by this means," he says, "I had many an aching head and pained breast, yet it was delightful to see hundreds of them attending with streaming eyes, and attention still as night, or to hear them in their simple way singing the praises of God in their own tongue. If ever God said to my heart, 'Go, and I will be with thee,' it was then. I extol the name of my adorable Master that my labors were not in vain. How gladly would I have spent my life with these dear souls." Here in Scotland as well as in Ireland the fountain of tears was opened by a native preacher.

This good Highlander attended Wesley's funeral, died the same year, and was the first to be placed in the same vault with the founder of Methodism; who had urged him and Thomas Walsh to preach to their own countrymen in their own tongue.



CHAPTER LXXXII

The Welsh Wing of Calvinistic Methodism

THE FATHERS OF A NEW NATIONAL CHURCH.—THE SHOUTS OF THE MOUNTAIN PILGRIMS.—THE EJECTION OF DANIEL ROWLANDS.—AN ANGLICAN BISHOP'S BLUNDER.—HOWELL HARRIS AND HIS SOLDIERS.—A NATION'S UPLIFTING.

“THE people are wounded by scores, and flock under the word by thousands.” Thus wrote Howell Harris to Whitefield in 1742. There were at least ten Methodist clergymen in Wales, and a hundred Dissenting congregations in sympathy with the movement. One hundred and sixty societies had been formed in six years, and forty of the new converts were working as exhorters.

The time had come for uniting these scattered flocks. The initiative was taken, not by the eminent Daniel Rowlands, whose own parish claimed his work, nor by William Williams, the hymnist, who was yet a curate of the Established Church, nor yet by the fervid but fragile Howell Davies, of Pembroke-shire, but by the strong and enthusiastic Howell Harris. The first Association of the Calvinistic Methodists was held at Waterford, near Caerphilly, Glamorganshire, in 1742, and their first Conference met on January 5th and 6th, 1743. Whitefield was chosen moderator, and continued to attend the assemblies till he went out the third time to Georgia.

Howell Harris was the general-overseer of the societies in Wales. The Welsh superintendents occupied the same position as Wesley's assistants, the public exhorters answered to his itinerants, and the private exhorters to his local preachers. At the first Association Daniel Rowlands, J. Powell, and William Williams were the clergymen present, and Howell Harris, Joseph Humphreys and John Cennick were the laymen.

Griffith Jones, who has been called the "Morning Star" of the Methodist revival in Wales, was now about sixty years of age. In his circulating schools 150,212 persons of different ages, from six years to seventy, were taught to read the Welsh Bible. At his death, in 1791, this first apostle of Welsh education left £7,000 to continue the work.

Daniel Rowlands, now in his thirtieth year, had been converted under Jones's ministry, and was a marvelous preacher. People flocked to hear him from every part of the principality; traveled fifty or sixty miles in companies, like the old Jews going up to their feasts in Jerusalem, and returned home singing hymns, which echoed far across the mountains. Over two thousand people sometimes attended his Communion service. His early preaching was terrifying, but "after preaching Sinai's thunder for a period," says one of his countrymen, "there came a beautiful calm, a melting power, remarkable for its sweetness, which calmed the troubled breast. The deep groans, the great distress, gave place to ecstatic joy and shouts of praise. The sighs and scenes of horror gave place to shouts of 'Glory! Hallelujah! Thank God!'" (Diolch iddo, Gogoniant, Bendigedig.)

Even in repeating the Church service—"By thine agony and bloody sweat; by thy cross and passion"—tears and convulsive sobs were followed by cries of "Gogoniant!" and

“Bendigedig!” which broke out in a rapturous chorus. One correspondent of the Countess of Huntingdon, describing the preaching of Rowlands, says: “He spoke wonderfully on Abraham looking up: Genesis xxii, 13. I never heard such a sermon before. Surely he is the greatest preacher in Europe. May the Lord own him more and more! The place rang with ‘Gogoniant!’ Keep on, blessed Jesus, to ride triumphantly through our land. Fill our cold hearts with thy love, then we shall praise thee from shore to shore. . . . Some of the people made our little town ring with ‘Gogoniant i Fab Dafydd! Hosanna trwy’r ne foedd! Hosanna hefyd trwy’r! Dœ ar, Dœ ar!’” (Glory be to the Son of David! Hosanna through the heavens! Hosanna also through the earth! Amen, Amen!) Over one hundred ministers regarded Rowlands as their spiritual father.

Daniel Rowlands was ejected from the Church of England in 1763, by the Bishop of St. David’s, on the ground of his “irregularities.” Dr. Ryle, the present Anglican Bishop of Liverpool (1900), rightly calls this “a disgraceful transaction.” The bishop sent the mandate revoking Rowlands’s license on a Sunday. The niece of an eyewitness describes the scene:

“My uncle was at Llangeitho Church that very morning. A stranger came forward and served Mr. Rowlands with a notice from the bishop at the very time when he was stepping into the pulpit. Mr. Rowlands read it, and told the people that the letter which he had just received was from the bishop, revoking his license. Mr. Rowlands then said: ‘We must obey the higher powers. Let me beg you will go out quietly, and then we shall conclude the service of the morning by the church gate.’ And so they walked out, weeping and crying. My uncle thought there was not a dry eye in the church at the

moment. Mr. Rowlands accordingly preached outside the church with extraordinary effect."

"A more unhappy, ill-timed, blundering exercise of episcopal power than this it is literally impossible to conceive!" says Bishop Ryle. "Here was a man of singular gifts and graces, who had no objection to anything in the Articles or Prayer Book, cast out of the Church of England for no other fault than excess of zeal. And this ejection took place at a time when scores of Welsh clergymen were shamefully neglecting their duties, and too often were drunkards, gamblers, and sportsmen, if not worse! That the bishop afterward bitterly repented of what he did is very poor consolation indeed. It was too late. The deed was done. Rowlands was shut out of the Church of England, and an immense number of his people all over Wales followed him. A breach was made in the walls of the Established Church which will probably never be healed. As long as the world stands the Church of England in Wales will never get over the injury done to it by the preposterous and stupid revocation of Daniel Rowlands's license.

"There is every reason to believe that Rowlands felt his expulsion most keenly. However, it made no difference in his line of action. His friends and followers soon built him a large and commodious chapel in the parish of Llangeitho, and migrated there in a body. He did not even leave Llangeitho rectory; for his son, being rector, allowed him to reside there as long as he lived. In fact, the Church of England lost everything by ejecting him, and gained nothing at all. The great Welsh preacher was never silenced practically for a single day, and the Church of England reaped a harvest of odium and dislike in Wales which is bearing fruit to this very hour." Such is the judgment of one of the

most venerable Anglican bishops of to-day on the expulsion of Daniel Rowlands.

An unhappy doctrinal controversy separated Rowlands and Harris in 1750, and checked the progress of Methodism. Harris retired to Trevecca, where he formed a community after the pattern of the Moravian settlements. Charles Wesley deeply regretted this, and sent him some stirring lines, which must have touched his heart, but did not change his purpose:

Awake, old soldier! to the fight half won,
And put thy strength, and put thine armor on!

He then pictures Harris as a youthful warrior, and concludes:

Mark well his love, simplicity, and zeal,
And tell thy heart—if thou be Harris still.

A few years later the alarm of a French invasion led Harris to accept a captain's commission in the local militia, and to enroll twenty-four of his household "in defense of the precious word of God against popery." He obtained permission to preach in the army, and introduced Methodism into some towns where hitherto the public authorities had sternly suppressed it. At Yarmouth the mob was quieted by his appearance on a table, surrounded by his men in their regimentals; and he proved a valuable ally to the Methodist itinerants in other places. Five of Howell Harris's soldiers entered the standing army, with a fervid conviction that they were warriors for Protestant liberty. We find them at the siege of Louisbourg, where they joined the New England troops of Pepperell, whose flag bore the inscription given them by Whitefield: "Nil desperandum. Christo duce." They were with Wolfe at the taking of Quebec, "by which Protestantism took possession of the North. They helped to

take Havana from the Spaniards—the last blow in that important war.” One of their brethren at Trevecca writes: “The Lord Jesus was with their spirits in a surprising manner. They kept close together in watching and prayer, reading the Bible, exhorting one another and their fellow-soldiers. They wrote home from Quebec that they had the spirit of prayer and reliance on the Lord even in the heat of the battles; because, say they, ‘we are in his care, and entered upon his way of life for him, fighting against popery, in defense of our Gospel privileges.’ Thus they were kept by our Saviour, contented and happy in their spirits, and in their bodies also, not receiving any material hurt.”

Among the fathers of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism Howell Davies holds an honored place. He was a convert of Griffith Jones, with a strong spirit in a frail body, who won several thousand converts. He had a poor living, but he met poverty with Christian humor. Shirley tells us that “as he was walking early on a Lord’s day to preach, he was accosted by a clergyman on horseback, who was on the same errand, but from a different motive, and complained that the drudgery of his profession was unprofitable, for he never could get above half a guinea for preaching. The honest Welshman replied that he preached for a crown. The hireling retorted and said, ‘You are a disgrace to the cloth.’ ‘Perhaps,’ said Davies, ‘I shall be held in greater disgrace in your estimation when I inform you that I am now going nine miles to preach and have but seven pence in my pocket to bear my expenses out and in, and do not expect the poor pittance remitted that I am now in possession of. But I look forward for a crown of glory.’”

William Williams was the singer of the movement; and somewhat later Peter Williams wrote a Scripture commentary

which is the family Bible of the Welsh people. In 1769 the breach between Howell Harris and his old friends was happily healed, and religious life began to beat more hopefully again. In 1785 the accession of the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, marks a new era in the history of the connection. He was hailed by the people by the name that Daniel Rowlands gave him on their first meeting—“The Gift of God to North Wales.” A great revival took place, and from this period, and chiefly from the labors of Mr. Charles, the Calvinistic and presbyterian form of Methodism became deeply rooted in the hearts of the Welsh people. In 1801 the Order and Form of Church Government and Rules of Discipline were agreed upon; but it was not until 1811 that the decisive act which severed the societies from the Church of England was taken by the presbyterian ordination of their preachers, sixteen years after their Wesleyan brethren in England had taken the step.

The rapid strides made by Calvinistic Methodism in Wales in recent years may be judged by the fact that in 1850 two hundred ministers shepherded fifty-eight thousand communicants. To-day (1900) about seven hundred pastors care for communicants who number nearly two hundred thousand of the Welsh people. Fifty years ago a writer in the *Quarterly Review*, of London, acknowledged that the public character of the principality has been changed by Methodism; that it has even given an extraordinary impulse to a purely native school of thought and literature; that not only numerous editions of the Bible, concordances, hymn books, and tracts of a missionary nature, but newspapers, magazines, and treatises on popular topics, such as geography and agriculture, stream yearly from the Welsh press; that those who imagine the Welsh intellect asleep or the language inopera-

tive as a medium of instruction have still to read a chapter in contemporary history; that "this influx of fresh thought is even expanding the language, which is evidently growing and enriched daily by the formation of self-evolved words, especially such as denote abstraction and generalization." Notwithstanding the spread of the English language, the Welsh still maintains its hold upon the people. They are justly proud of the names of Griffith Jones, Harris, Rowlands, Davies, and Charles, as the founders of the strongest Church in the principality. We shall see that their work created the demand for Bibles and led to the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, "by which, and its noble offspring, the American Bible Society," as Stevens well says, "their sound has gone out into all the world."



CHAPTER LXXXIII

The Wesleys in Wales

JOHN WESLEY'S FIRST WELSH CONVERT.—CHARLES WESLEY, THE PEACE-MAKER.—AT THE SWORD'S POINT.—SIGNIFICANT BEGINNINGS AT BRECKNOCK.—THE GENESIS OF THE ARMINIAN MAGAZINE.—RUFFLES AND CAPS.—RICHARD RODDA.

JOHN WESLEY preached his first sermon in Wales on October 15, 1739, on the little green at the foot of the Devauden Hill, near Chepstow. David Young, the latest historian of Welsh Wesleyan Methodism, says this was not far from where the labors of Wroth and Cradoc, a hundred years before, had been so owned and prospered by God. Wesley's first convert was a poor woman who had walked six miles to hear him, and following him to Abergavenny, Usk, and Pontypool, found peace, and stood by his side at Cardiff, the wave-sheaf of an abundant harvest. At Cardiff he preached in the shire hall, and on later visits in the castle yard. As he explained the last six beatitudes he tells us that his heart was so enlarged that he knew not how to give over, so he "continued three hours." At Cardiff was formed the mother church, and here Wesley opened his first chapel in Wales on May 6, 1743.

Charles Wesley found the Cardiff society troubled by the

exaggerated reports of the Calvinistic teaching of Howell Harris, but with much tact he acted as a peacemaker, bearing public testimony to his friend's high character and service,



DRAWN BY G. WILLARD BONTE.

HOUSE IN CARNARVON.

Wesley lodged here on his visits to Wales, 1747, 1748, 1749.

and closing with hearty prayer for the great Welsh evangelist. He sent to Harris the following fraternal letter:

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER: In the name of Jesus Christ I beseech you, if you have his glory and the good of souls at heart, come immediately and meet me here. I trust we shall never be two in time or eternity. O my brother, I am grieved that Satan should get a moment's advantage over us, and am ready to lay my neck at your feet for Christ's sake. If your heart is as my heart, hasten in the name of the Lord to your second self,

C. WESLEY.

Harris's Calvinism was of the most moderate type. A few days later these friends met. All misunderstanding vanished. Harris told Charles Wesley that he renounced the decree of

reprobation and utterly abhorred it. "And as to the not falling from grace: (1) He believed that it ought not to be mentioned to the unjustified or to any that were slack and careless, much less that lived in sin; but only to the earnest and disconsolate mourners. (2) He did himself believe it was possible for one to fall away who had been 'enlightened' with some knowledge of God, 'who had tasted of the heavenly gift, and been made partaker of the Holy Ghost;' and wished we would all agree to keep close, in the controverted points, to the very words of Holy Writ. (3) That he accounted no man so justified as not to fall, till he had a thorough, abiding hatred to all sin, and a continued hunger and thirst after all righteousness."

On sundry occasions afterward Harris loyally defended Wesley and his teaching against those who thought to spread dissension and to injure Wesley's character, beseeching them even with tears to follow after the things which make for peace. The Wesley brothers manifested no jealousy of the success of the Calvinistic Methodism which has become so firmly rooted in the principality.

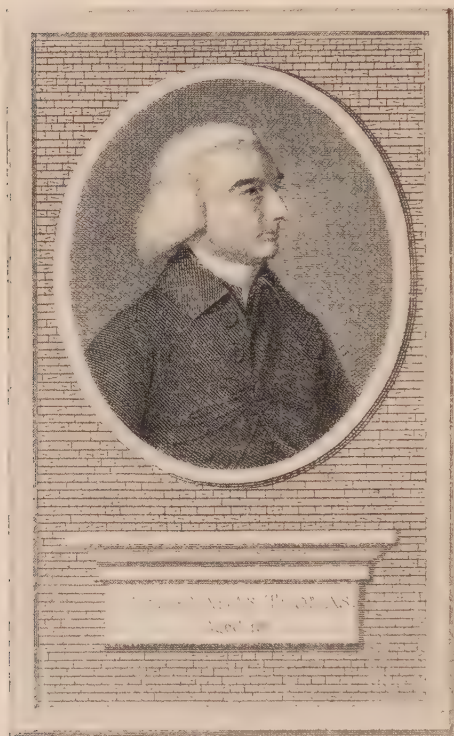
The first Wesleyan society met at the house of Captain Phillips, where on one occasion Charles Wesley had a narrow escape from fatal violence. The publicans and players found their craft endangered by Methodism, and beset the house, armed with swords. One stole in unobserved, but the sword was wrested from him as he was about to use it on the poet preacher. The next day Charles Wesley presented the sword to the bailiff as a trophy, and, detained in Cardiff by the tide, the Methodists "took the sword of the Spirit," says David Young, "by means of which they drew tears instead of shedding blood, and many of their enemies were brought to repentance and led to the cross." Among the converts was

a fashionable lady for whose entertainment the players had lampooned Wesley on the stage.

Wales appears as a circuit on the Conference list of 1746, and when the office of assistant or superintendent was insti-

tuted, in 1749, Barnabas Thomas, whose quaint portrait here appears, was the first to be appointed to this wide Welsh bishopric. His name appears in Wesley's Deed of Declaration. It must be noted that Wesley's first preachers in the principality were regarded as English, the story of Welsh Wesleyan Methodism dating from the first year of the next century.

The County of Brecknock is famous in the history of both wings of Methodism. It supplied the first evangelist, Harris; the first train-



FROM A CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE.

THE FIRST SUPERINTENDENT OF THE
WALES CIRCUIT.

ing college, Trevecca; the first martyr, Seward; and the first hymnist, Williams. It found Charles Wesley an ideal wife; it gave Wesleyan Methodism the "Father of Missions," Dr. Coke; it was Joseph Pilmoor's circuit before he, with Richard Boardman, went to America, in 1769; and

Walter Churchey, a lawyer and a quaint versifier of Brecknock, is said to have suggested to Wesley the publishing of the *Arminian Magazine*. A native of the town of Brecon became the founder of the Welsh Wesleyan Church. "A grand succession of saintly men ministered in the old Brecon Chapel," says the Rev. T. Wynne Jones in the *Methodist Recorder* of 1896: "Harris, the pioneer of Methodist open-air preaching; Whitefield, the Baptist of Methodism; Charles Wesley, the psalmist of the revival; Coke, the indomitable missionary; Fletcher, the saintly theologian; Benson, the erudite commentator; Mather, Methodism's second president after Wesley's death; Bradford, Wesley's companion and friend; Taylor, the earnest Yorkshireman, the founder of Methodism in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales; James Wood, James Dixon, Joseph Pilmoor, and Richard Whatcoat; Samuel Warren, the renowned agitator; Harris Lloyd, Methodism's first Welsh lay preacher; John Hughes, the learned Breconian; Daniel J. Draper, the hero of the wrecked ship London, and Wesley himself."

The most prominent names among the Methodists of the town were the Church family. William Church entered the ministry in 1776. The license to preach which was granted him by the Brecknock Quarter Sessions, in 1774, which certified he had taken the oath of allegiance and subscribed to the Declaration against Popery, was deposited a few years ago at the Mission House by his grandson. Wesley was very intimate with William Church. To him was written the following interesting epistle:

WALLINGFORD, October 13, 1778.

DEAR BILLY: The soul and the body make a man; the spirit and discipline make a Christian. Let John Watson and you agree together and be exact in this wherever you go. Insist upon the observance of all the society rules,

and on the observance of all, even the least, of the band rules, by all who meet in band. I give, for instance, no band tickets to any woman who wears either ruffles or a high-crowned cap. If any will not lay aside these rather than lose that blessed means of improvement, she is not worthy of it.

I am your affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

Walter Churchey was another of the first fruits, a quaint, original, and interesting character: "An enthusiastic Welshman," says Tyerman; "a lawyer with a large family and a slender purse; a good, earnest, conceited old Methodist, who, unfortunately for his wife and children, had more delight in writing poetry than he had employment in preparing briefs. He was one of Wesley's correspondents as early as 1771, exchanged letters with Charles Wesley, was an acquaintance of the saintly Fletcher, and an intimate friend of Joseph Benson and Dr. Coke. He claimed the honor of having first suggested to Wesley the publishing of the *Arminian Magazine*. . . . He was a good man, though perhaps too imaginative. Very diligent, but very poor, a warm admirer of Methodist doctrine, but withal a Millenarian." He died in 1806. His town house and office was next door to the house in Brecon in which Dr. Coke was born. Both houses have been re-fronted. Within much of the old remains.

Brave Thomas Taylor evangelized South Wales, crossing mountains, fording rivers, plunging into bogs with empty purse and stomach, preaching with burning zeal and divine power. Richard Rodda also endured apostolic hardships. At Bishops Castle, a town wicked to a proverb, he says, "I had nobody with me, but the Lord was with me of a truth." He sent out the crier, and hundreds flocked to hear the man whom God blessed with "matter, manner, and liberty." Some threw their hats in his face, but as Rodda preached tears began to trickle down their faces, and at the close of

the day a great victory was won, and the preacher was entreated to come again. The next day, at Tenbury, a rough mob brought gunpowder and filled the house with sulphurous smoke; but a man with a large bludgeon, whose heart the Lord touched, rose from his seat, threatened the disturbers'



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

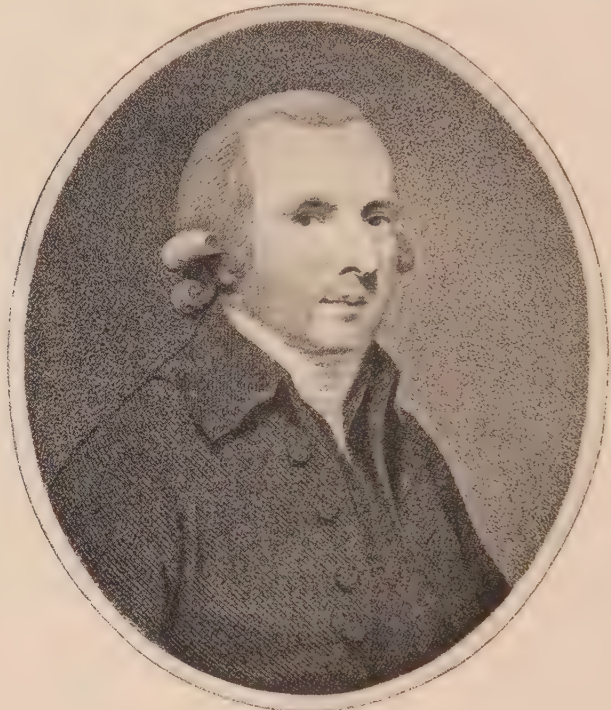
AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH.

TOWN HOUSE OF WALTER CHURCHEY, BRECON.

Dr. Thomas Coke was born in the house adjoining.

“brains,” and championed the preacher. Richard Rodda had been a Cornish miner. Praying in secret, the words “Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee,” flashed upon his troubled conscience, and in that hour he found peace and joy. The dark mine became a sanctuary to him, and once, when he was on his knees, his attitude of devotion saved his life. A large stone fell before him and reached above his head; another fell at his right hand, and another at his left, each, like the first, being higher than himself; a fourth fell upon

these, about four inches above him, and sheltered him. Had he been in any other posture, he would have been crushed. He was able to breathe through the crevices of the rocks, and



FROM A CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE BY RIDLEY.

RICHARD RODDA.

pray on, until the mass was removed and he was brought out rejoicing, and dedicating his life anew to God. Such a man knew no fear, and the power of God was with him "both to wound and heal." The cries and prayers of his hearers often constrained him to stop in his sermons and mingle his supplications and tears with theirs. He labored for thirty-three years as an itinerant, living to see Edward Jones institute Welsh Wesleyan preaching and societies in 1801.

Wesley formed the first society at Swansea in 1758. He preached in the green court of the old castle, and in his congregation were many "gay and well-dressed persons." Five years later he found Arminians and Calvinists meeting together in a room in Castle Street. They separated again in 1771, when the first Wesleyan chapel was opened. It is not surprising that difficulties often arose out of the complicated conditions of Methodist work in Wales. Some of the Calvinistic preachers publicly denounced the Wesleyan preachers, and they had the advantage of being Welshmen, masters of their native tongue. "Wesley's preachers," says David Young, "were young Englishmen, ignorant of the language of the people." They were sometimes irritated by the attacks of the Calvinists. Wesley's characteristic advice was as follows: "(1) Let all the people sacredly abstain from backbiting, talebearing, evil-speaking. (2) Let all our preachers abstain from railing, either in public or private, as well as from disputing. (3) Let them never preach controversy, but plain, practical, and experimental religion." Joseph Pilmoor, who with Richard Boardman went out from Wales to America, also makes mention in his diary of the difficulties which arose out of the antinomian doctrines that prevailed in the County of Pembroke in his day.



CHAPTER LXXXIV

The Weddings of the Wesley Brothers

MARMADUKE GWYNNE, METHODIST MAGISTRATE OF GARTH.—AN UNWELCOME GUEST.—CHARLES WESLEY'S WOOING.—AN IDEAL CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.—JOHN WESLEY'S MATRIMONIAL DISASTER.

IT was appropriate that in Wales—ever the home of the twin sisters, poetry and music—the leading chorister of Methodism should find an ideal wife. The lady of Charles Wesley's choice was Sarah Gwynne.

Sarah Gwynne was the daughter of Marmaduke Gwynne, a Welsh esquire of family and fortune whom we have already met at Wesley's Conference at Bristol, in 1745. He had been converted under the teaching of Howell Harris. A rigid Churchman and a magistrate, he went, with the riot act in his pocket, to commit the evangelist to prison, as he understood that he taught doctrines injurious to Church and State. He told his wife, however, as he left home, "I will hear the man myself before I commit him." The Welsh layman's sermon touched the magistrate's heart. He expected to see a dangerous disturber of the peace; he found an evangelical apostle. He begged the preacher to pardon him for being so easily misled by slander and pressed him to come to Garth.

The neighboring gentry were not a little startled, but



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thought well to refrain from any further persecution of the Methodists since they had found such an honorable protector. Mrs. Gwynne was greatly disturbed. She was one of six heiresses of rank, and the mistress of a stately home, as homes were then regarded; nine children and twenty servants formed her household, and a domestic chaplain read morning and evening prayers with the family. She was a lady of generous impulses, but of proud heart, and detested Dissenters; and when her husband brought Howell Harris to Garth, and treated him with as much respect as if he were a bishop, she thought he must have lost his senses. Although Harris was an educated man, of fair estate, she quitted the room and would not return until he had gone. Still more grieved was she when her daughter Sarah became an earnest hearer of the layman's preaching. She was led, however, to read John Wesley's Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion. Her prejudices were removed; she heard Harris for herself, and when John Wesley came to Wales she gave him a hospitable welcome.

Charles Wesley came to Garth in 1747 and spent five pleasant days, and seven months later, as he returned from Ireland, worn with sickness, he was nursed with tender care. These visits introduced him to charming Sarah Gwynne, and he opened his heart to Mr. Perronet, of Shoreham, who did not discourage him in his hope of winning the young lady, whose name soon became changed to "Sally" in the poet-preacher's Journal. When he proposed marriage, in 1748, Mrs. Gwynne said she would rather give her child to Mr. Wesley than to any man in England, and Mr. Gwynne, also consenting, left it to his capable wife to arrange that an income of £100 a year should be secured by Charles Wesley. John Wesley finally proposed that his brother should receive

the amount needed for his support out of the profits of the Methodist Book Room.

A letter of Vincent Perronet, who throughout acted a father's part to Charles Wesley, shows how clearly this keen-



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS FROM A MINIATURE.

MRS. SARAH WESLEY.

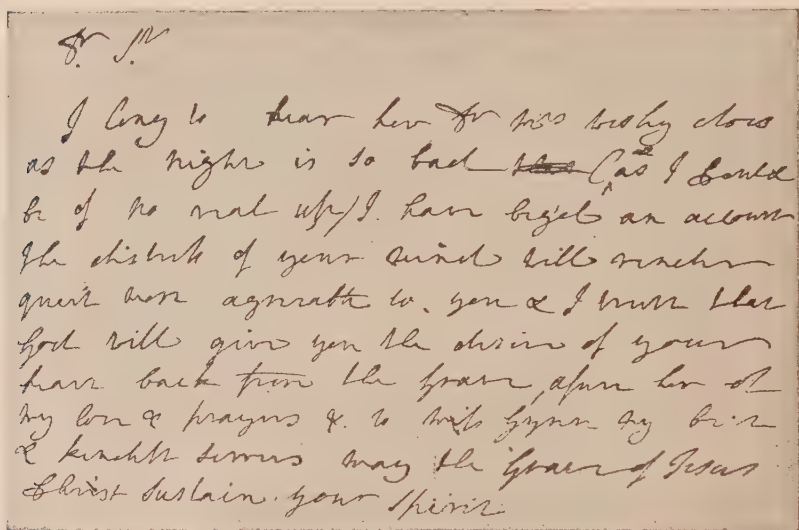
sighted clergyman foresaw the growth of Methodism. Replying to Mrs. Gwynne's doubts as to the security of the provision, he writes: "The very writings of these two gentlemen are even at this time a very valuable estate; and when it

shall please God to open the minds of men more, and prejudice is worn off, it will be still more valuable. An able bookseller has valued a great part of their works at £2,500; but I will venture to say this is not half their value. They are works which will last and sell while any sense of true religion and learning shall remain among us." (Telford notes that the Wesleyan Book Room a century later grants £4,000 a year to various connectional funds out of its annual profits, and we may add that the Methodist Book Concern in America has distributed dividends of over \$100,000 a year to worn-out preachers.)

"Not a cloud was to be seen from morning to night," writes Charles Wesley on the day of his wedding, April 8, 1749. "At eight I led my Sally to church. . . . My brother joined our hands. I never had more of the divine presence at the sacrament. My brother gave out a hymn; he then prayed over us in strong faith. . . . We were cheerful without mirth, serious without sadness. My brother seemed the happiest person among us." It was an ideal Christian marriage.

For twenty-two years after their marriage Charles Wesley and his wife had a home at Bristol. He did not altogether cease to itinerate until 1756. Mrs. Wesley accompanied him on his journeys—riding behind on his horse, after the fashion of the day. The marriage delighted the Methodists, and Charles Wesley received a warm greeting at the Foundry. "I am married to more than one, or one thousand, of them." On the first "round" he records, "All look upon my Sally with my eyes." She was sometimes quite spent with the fatigue of the rough journeys. On Hounslow Heath they narrowly escaped from a highwayman, who crossed the road, passed them, and robbed all the coaches and passengers behind them.

In 1753 a severe attack of smallpox so robbed Mrs. Wesley of her early beauty that many of her friends could not recognize her, but her husband was accustomed to declare that "he admired her more than ever he had done before." This opinion he never altered. It was during this illness that Lady Huntingdon nursed her, and wrote the letter of which we give a facsimile. Eight children were born to Mr. and



My dear Mr. Wesley
 I long to hear her for two holy days
 as the night is so bad ~~the~~ ^{as} I could
 be of no real use. I have begot an account
 the discharge of your kind letter which
 quite was agreeable to you & I trust the
 God will give you the desire of your
 have back from the grave, after her &
 my love & prayers & to keep you by his
 & kindly services may the grace of Jesus
 Christ sustain your spirit

NOTE FROM LADY HUNTINGDON TO CHARLES WESLEY, WRITTEN
 AT THE TIME OF MRS. WESLEY'S ILLNESS.

Mrs. Wesley in Bristol; five of whom died in infancy. Two sons and a daughter were spared them. Of the remarkable musical gifts of the sons we must give account when we deal with their parents' life in London, whither they removed in 1771.

Mrs. Wesley's fine ear for music, her "voice of delightful quality," her skill on the harpsichord, and her exquisite rendering of the solos from Handel's oratorios aided in the

early development of the musical genius of her sons. On one occasion she had accompanied her son Charles (who was private organist to George III) to Windsor. The king was informed that Mr. Wesley's mother was in the next apartment. His majesty walked in and, addressing her, said :

“Madam, all your family are musical,” and inquired if her husband performed on any instrument, and if she sang.

She replied that her husband played the German flute, and that she could sing a little.

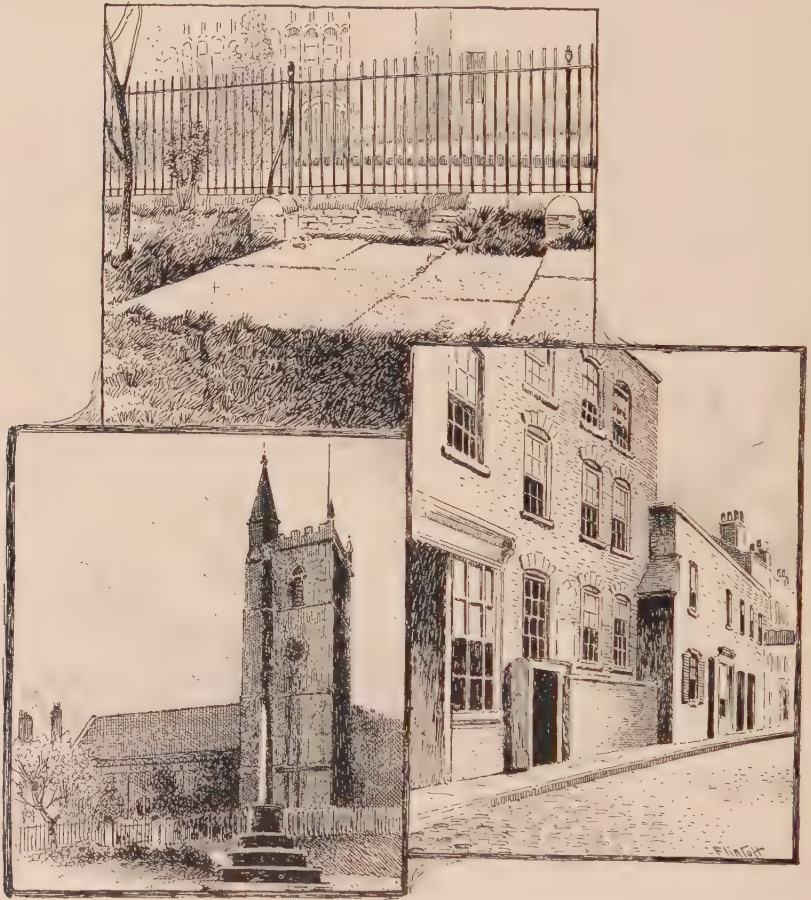
“What do you sing?”

“Handel's oratorio songs.”

“Handel!” exclaimed the king. “There is nothing to be compared to him.” He then said that he believed music was intended “for the noblest purposes;” and Mrs. Wesley added her opinion, that “it was intended to raise our hearts above this world.”

John Wesley's marriage presents a sad contrast to his brother's happy union. Dr. Rigg, in his *Living Wesley*, with psychological insight and balanced judgment has forever vindicated Wesley, and the Christian women with whom he was brought into close relations before and after his unhappy marriage, from the austere and by no means discriminating or delicate criticism of more voluminous writers on the subject. Wesley's letters, he says, reveal his “extreme natural susceptibility to whatever was graceful and amiable in woman, especially if united to mental vigor and moral excellence. He had been brought up in the society of clever and virtuous women—his sisters—and it seems as if he could at no time in his life dispense with the exquisite and stimulating pleasure which he found in female society and correspondence. He was naturally a woman worshiper—at least a worshiper of such women. An almost reverent courtesy, a warm but pure

affection, a delicate but close familiarity, marked through life his relations with the good and gifted women—gifted they



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

AFTER PHOTOGRAPHS.

GRAVE OF CHARLES WESLEY'S CHILDREN, ST. JAMES CHURCHYARD.
ST. JAMES CHURCH, BRISTOL. CHARLES WESLEY'S HOUSE, BRISTOL.

were, for the most part—with whom he maintained friendship and correspondence.”

Alexander Knox, who convinced Southey of Wesley's

freedom from personal ambition, also wrote to Hannah More a letter which reveals an unbiased critic's view of Wesley's relation to his women friends. He is writing of Wesley's friendship with Miss Knox, and having transcribed a note to himself, in which Wesley sends an earnest message to "My dear Sally Knox," declaring that he "loves her dearly, and shall be glad to meet her at our Lord's right hand," Mr. Knox proceeds as follows: "John Wesley's impressible nature inclined him to conceive such attachments, and the childlike innocence of his heart disposed him to express them with the most amiable simplicity. The gayety of his nature was so undiminished in its substance, while it was divinely disciplined in its movements, that to the latest hour of his life there was nothing innocently pleasant with which he was not pleased, and nothing naturally lovely which, in its due proportion, he was not ready to love. To interesting females, especially, this affection continually showed itself; of its nature and kind, what he says of my sister gives a striking manifestation."

This susceptibility of Wesley shows that his somewhat ascetic and intensely busy public life and his ecclesiastical statesmanship did not crush his tender human feeling, as some of his critics have supposed.

In four instances Wesley the friend became a lover before he made the fatal mistake of marrying one who proved unworthy of his affection. Miss Betty Kirkham, the sister of one of the earliest Oxford Methodists, was his first love. With her he corresponded in the curious stilted manner of the day—a style he afterward utterly forsook. In those first love letters he transformed prosaic Betty into the romantic "Varanese," just as in his later correspondence with Mrs. Pendarves (Delany), already noted, he named that lady

"Aspasia," his brother Charles "Cyrus," and himself "Araspes." Then came his ill-fated love affair with Miss Hopkey, in Georgia, which revealed what Canon Overton calls "his extreme guilelessness, his readiness to believe the



DRAWN BY G. AILLARD BONTE.

AFTER PHOTOGRAPHS.

LLANLLEONFEL CHURCH.

Where Charles Wesley was married.

THE GWYNNE HOUSE AT GARTH.

The girlhood home of Mrs. Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley.

best of everybody, his utterly unsuspecting nature." But the broken courtship which brought him most pain resulted from his love for Grace Murray.

Grace Murray, a sailor's widow, was then a devoted worker in the orphanage at Newcastle. She had a hundred members in her classes, was a skillful housekeeper, and nursed the sick itinerants who found refuge in Wesley's northern home. In

spite of the pungent aspersions of Tyerman there is nothing in the history of her residence at the orphanage inconsistent with the conclusion that "she was a woman not only of singular tact, but of attractive modesty and of deep piety." All who knew her best testify to this; her diary, and the savor of her piety, and long after-life as a wife and widow of another than Wesley confirm this. Canon Overton is in evident sympathy with Charles Wesley's strong objection to having "a ci-devant servant-maid for his sister-in-law." But she was far superior in intelligence and true refinement to many "ladies of quality" of the coarse Georgian period. That she manifested weakness and vacillation under circumstances of great perplexity may be granted, but in a woman of tender conscience and compassionate heart, surrounded by conflicting counselors, this is not surprising. John Bennet, one of Wesley's preachers, and John Wesley himself both fell in love with her. She had nursed the former through an illness of six months, in 1747, and next year Wesley was under her care for six days. She accompanied the preachers on their journeys to assist in village work, in leading bands and classes, and addressing small gatherings. According to the custom of that century, when women everywhere rode on pillion behind servant-man, friend, or relative, she followed the fashion. Mrs. Charles Wesley did the same. Mr. Tyerman reflects on Wesley for thus taking Grace Murray with him on journeys when there was special work for her to do. Wesley's contemporaries would have thought no evil of this, nor was there any impropriety in it. She corresponded with John Bennet, and, though there does not appear to have been a definite agreement between them, their marriage was no doubt looked forward to by both; but when John Wesley, with characteristic decision, made her an

offer of marriage in August, 1748, she accepted it with surprise and delight. But John Bennet proved to be a successful rival, persuaded Grace Murray that it was her duty to marry him, and said that if she did not, he should "run mad." Charles Wesley intervened, alarmed at the thought of his brother marrying a woman who was so inferior to his own wife in social station. He saw Grace Murray and passionately remonstrated with her—"Grace Murray, you have broken my heart!" The weak, distressed, and vacillating woman rode with him to Newcastle and fell at Bennet's feet, begging forgiveness for using him so badly. Within a week she became John Bennet's wife.

Bennet soon left Wesley, taking with him the majority of the members at Bolton and Stockport. He afterward became a Calvinistic minister at Warburton, where he died, in 1759.

The loss of Grace Murray was the greatest personal sorrow of John Wesley's life. Very pathetic are the letters and verses in which he refers to the event. He did not meet her again until 1788. "The meeting was affecting," says Moore, who was present; "but Mr. Wesley preserved more than his usual self-possession. It was easy to see, notwithstanding the many years which had intervened, that both in sweetness of spirit and in person and manners she was a fit subject for the tender regrets expressed in his verses. The interview did not continue long, and I do not remember that I ever heard Mr. Wesley mention her name afterward."

If Wesley had married Grace Murray, he would have been saved from the matrimonial disaster which afterward befell him. In 1751 he married Mrs. Vazeille, the widow of a London merchant. Wesley took care that her fortune should be settled on herself and children, and it was agreed that he should not preach one sermon or travel one mile less

than before his marriage. During the first four years Mrs. Wesley accompanied her husband on many of his journeys, but she naturally grew discontented with the discomforts of this unsettled life, and when she remained at home she became possessed of such an absurd jealousy of her husband that she almost became a monomaniac.

Charles Wesley early discovered her to be of an angry and bitter spirit, and in 1753 wrote to his own amiable



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF GAINSBOROUGH'S PORTRAIT, FURNISHED BY THE REV. W. H. MEREDITH.

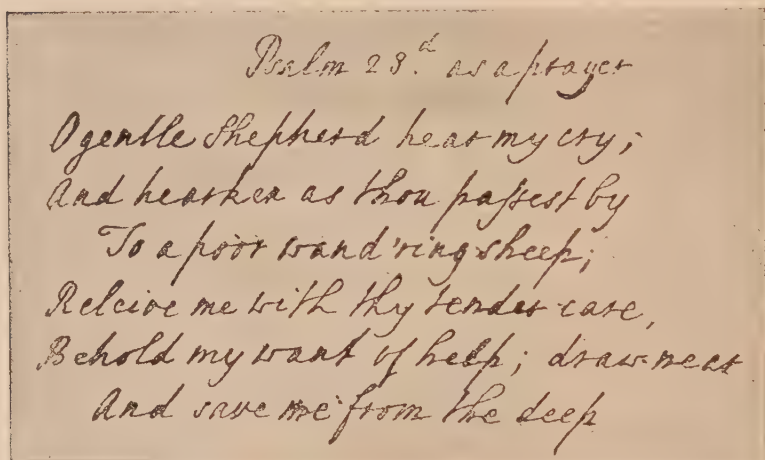
MRS. JOHN WESLEY.

Mrs. Vazeille, to whom John Wesley was married, 1751.

wife, "I called, two minutes before preaching, on Mrs. Wesley at the Foundry, and in all that time had not one quarrel." He begs his wife to be courteous without trusting her. She acted with such unreasonable malice that it is charitable to accept the suggestion that she was at times mentally unsound. She seized her husband's papers, interpolated his letters, and then gave them into the hands of his enemies or published them in the newspapers. She shut up Charles Wesley with her husband in a room, and told them of their faults with

much detail and violence. Charles called her his "best friend," for this service, but began to recite Latin poetry and persisted until she at last set her prisoners free. He had tried this device with good effect on his voyage from Georgia.

Sometimes Mrs. Wesley drove a hundred miles to see who was with her husband in his carriage. John Hampson, one



STANZA OF UNPUBLISHED HYMN BY CHARLES WESLEY.

In the handwriting of Mrs. Charles Wesley.

of Wesley's preachers, witnessed her in one of her fits of fury, and said "more than once she laid violent hands upon him, and tore those venerable locks which had suffered sufficiently from the ravages of time." She often left him, but returned again in answer to his entreaties. In 1771 he writes: "For what cause I know not, my wife set out for Newcastle, purposing 'never to return.' Non eam reliqui; non dimisi; non revocabo." (I did not forsake her; I did not dismiss her; I shall not recall her.)

In 1774 a petulant letter shows she was still with her husband. She died at Camberwell, in 1781, when Wesley was in the West of England. Jackson in his *Life of Charles Wesley* says that several letters of Wesley to his termagant wife, during his worst trials from her, show "the utmost tenderness of affection, such as few female hearts could have withstood; and justify the opinion that, had it been his happiness to be married to a person who was worthy of him, he could have been one of the most affectionate husbands that ever lived. Those who think that he was constitutionally cold and repulsive utterly mistake his character."

He told Henry Moore that he believed God overruled this prolonged sorrow for his good; and that if Mrs. Wesley had been a better wife, and had continued to act in that way she knew well how to act, he might have been unfaithful to his great work, and might have sought too much to please her according to her own desires.



CHAPTER LXXXV

Panics, Politics, and Methodist Ethics

THE EARTHQUAKES OF 1750-1756.—THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR.—WESLEY AND THE METHODIST ELECTORS.—POLITICAL MORALITY.—KING GEORGE III.—"KING WILKES" AND "KING MOB."

THE Methodist leaders were keenly interested in national events, and probably no man of his century saw so much of the life of the people in every part of Britain as John Wesley. In a letter to Lord North, which we must notice later, Wesley says that as he traveled four or five thousand miles every year, he had "an opportunity of conversing freely with more persons of every denomination than any one else in the three kingdoms." Charles Wesley's hymns, in their complete form, touch upon most of the public occurrences of the day.

When the first great earthquake panic occurred, in February, 1750, John Wesley and Whitefield were in London, and Charles was in Bristol. John Wesley says there were three distinct tremors, or wavings to and fro, attended with a hoarse, rumbling noise, like thunder. A month later Charles Wesley was preaching at the Foundry at a quarter past five in the morning when the second and far more violent shock occurred. The old Foundry was shaken so violently that all

expected it would fall. A great commotion followed, but with much presence of mind the preacher calmed the people by crying out, "Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and the hills be carried into the midst of the sea: for the Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." He adds, "He filled my heart with faith and my mouth with words."

Ten days later Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight were shaken. The prophecies of a half-crazy dragoon, that the city and Westminster would be destroyed between twelve and one at night, created frantic fear. "Yesterday," writes Charles Wesley to Mrs. Gwynne, "I saw the Westminster end of the town full of coaches, and crowds flying out of the reach of divine justice with astonishing precipitation. Their panic was caused by a poor madman's prophecy: last night they were all to be swallowed up. The vulgar were in almost as great consternation as their betters. Most of them watched all night; multitudes in the fields and open places; several in their coaches. Many removed their goods. London looked like a sacked city. A lady stepping into her coach to escape, dropped dead. Many came all night knocking at the Foundry door, and begging admittance for God's sake." But he remarks of the Methodists, "Our poor people were calm and quiet as at another time." He preached the sermon (included in the printed collections) with the title "The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes." Whitefield preached at midnight in Hyde Park, surrounded by an affrighted crowd. Amid dense darkness, in his most impressive tones, he called the attention of the awe-struck multitudes to the coming judgment, the wreck of nature, and the sealing of all men's destinies. John Wesley held a solemn fast day and watch night services, at which were remarkable manifestations of the divine presence. He

issued a collection of Hymns Occasioned by the Earthquake, March 8, 1750, and the Methodists joyfully sang Charles Wesley's hymn in the midst of the panic:

How happy then are we,
Who build, O Lord, on thee !
What can our foundation shock ?
Though the shattered earth remove
Stands our city on a rock,
On the rock of heavenly Love.

A house we call our own,
Which cannot be o'erthrown :
In the general ruin sure,
Storms and earthquakes it defies ;
Built immovably secure ;
Built eternal in the skies.

When the tidings of the terrible earthquake at Lisbon reached England in 1756, and the country was also agitated by the fears of a French invasion, Charles Wesley wrote his hymn:

How happy are the little flock
Who, safe beneath their guardian-rock,
In all commotions rest !
When war's and tumult's waves run high
Unmoved above the storm they lie,
They lodge in Jesus' breast.

"Men," says John Wesley, "were divided in their expectations concerning the ensuing year. Some believed it would bring a large harvest of temporal calamities; others that it would be unusually fruitful of spiritual blessings." In February a national fast was observed. The Methodist meeting-houses were filled. Charles Wesley reprinted Hymns for Times of Trouble. George Whitefield published an address in which he spoke of "an insulting, enraged, and perfidious enemy advancing nearer and nearer to the British borders," "accompanied by thousands of Romish priests, to invade, sub-

due, and destroy the bodies and substance, and to blind, deceive, and tyrannize over the souls and consciences of the people belonging to this happy isle." John Wesley, ever practical, proposed to raise five hundred volunteers, supported by contributions, ready to act for a year in case of invasion. They were to be supplied with arms from the Tower and to be drilled by one of the king's sergeants. The offer does not appear to have been accepted. During the Seven Years' War the Methodists observed the national fasts and united in constant intercession. The year 1759—the year of great victories—saw the defeat of the French at Minden, and the destruction of the French fleet at Lagos and Quiberon Bay, and the capture of Quebec by the dying Wolfe, followed, the ensuing year, by the fall of Montreal.

Wesley's Journal throws interesting side lights on this period of national history. On October 15, 1759, he writes: "I walked up to Knowle, a mile from Bristol, to see the French prisoners. Above eleven hundred of them, we were informed, were confined in that little place, without anything to lie on but a little dirty straw, or anything to cover them but a few foul, thin rags, either by day or by night, so that they died like rotten sheep. I was much affected, and preached in the evening on 'Thou shalt not oppress a stranger; for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt' (Exod. xxiii, 9). Eighteen pounds were contributed immediately, which were made up four-and-twenty the next day. With this we bought linen and woollen cloth, which was made up into shirts, waistcoats, and breeches. Some dozen of stockings were added; all of which were carefully distributed where there was the greatest want. Presently after, the corporation of Bristol sent a large quantity of mattresses and blankets.

And it was not long before contributions were set on foot at London and in various parts of the kingdom; so that I believe from this time they were pretty well provided with all the necessaries of life."

A month later Wesley returned to London, and preached at West Street Chapel on November 29, the day of national thanksgiving: "I believe the oldest man in England has not seen a thanksgiving day so observed before. It had the solemnity of the General Fast. All the shops were shut up; the people in the streets appeared, one and all, with an air of seriousness; the prayers, lessons, and whole public service were admirably suited to the occasion. The prayer for our enemies, in particular, was extremely striking; perhaps it is the first instance of the kind in Europe. There was no noise, hurry, bonfires, fireworks in the evening, and no public diversions. This is indeed a Christian holiday, a 'rejoicing unto the Lord!' The next day came the news that Sir Edward Hawke had dispersed the French fleet."

In May a portion of the French fleet, driven to desperation by famine, landed at Carrickfergus, in the North of Ireland, and captured the town. Wesley was visiting the town when the French general, Cavignac, was there, and gives a full account of the event. He conversed with Cavignac "not on the circumstances but the essence of religion. He seemed to startle at nothing, but said more than once, and with emotion, 'Why, this is my religion; there is no true religion besides it!'"

The parliamentary elections of the day were often as riotous as Hogarth depicts them in his contemporary cartoons. We find Wesley "hastening to Bristol on account of the election" in 1756. He called all the freemen of the society together after preaching, and "enlarged a little on his

majesty's character, and the reasons we had to spare no pains in his service," with a view to persuading some of them to vote for John Spencer, who was opposing Jarrit Smith, a suspected Jacobite. This at least reveals the loyalty of the Wesleys to King George. "The whole city is in confusion," writes Wesley to Mr. Blackwell. "O what a pity there could not be some way of managing elections of every sort without this embittering of Englishmen against Englishmen, and kindling fires which cannot be quenched in many years!"

About 1764 he wrote a letter to the societies at Bristol in which he utters a noble protest against political corruption: "For God's sake, for the honor of the Gospel, for your country's sake, and for the sake of your own souls, beware of bribery. Before you see me again the trial will come at the general election for members of Parliament. On no account take money or money's worth. Keep yourselves pure. Give, not sell, your vote. Touch not the accursed thing, lest it bring a blast upon you and your household." He asserts that this political morality is essential "to your retaining the life of faith, and the testimony of a good conscience." Such was the ethical teaching of the leader of the Great Revival.

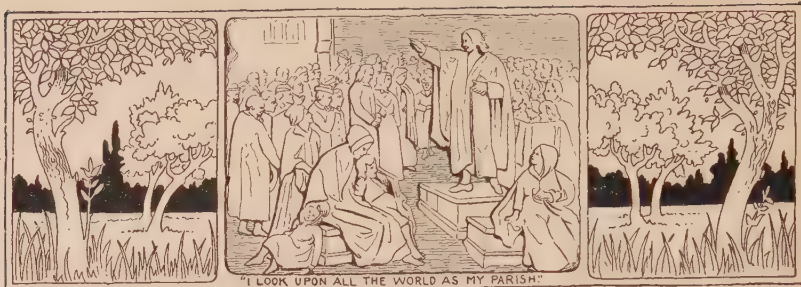
When King George II died, suddenly, at his palace at Kensington, in 1760, Wesley, who was at Bristol, noted the event in his Journal, and arranged that the following Friday should be set apart by the society as a day of fasting, and special prayer for the nation and the young king who "gloried in the name of Briton." Dr. Stoughton in his *History of Religion in England* has well remarked that, whatever might be the political faults of George III, of his personal virtues and the sincerity of his religious faith there

can be no doubt. Traditions of his devoutness still linger among the stories of old times at Windsor, and they include anecdotes of his sympathy with religious people of different Churches. He allowed his Nonconformist servants ample opportunity for devotional services, spoke with respect of the Independent minister in the town, and it is related that, once passing by a Methodist meetinghouse surrounded by a tumultuous rabble, he said, "The Methodists are a quiet, good kind of people and will disturb nobody; and, if I learn that any persons in my employment disturb them, they shall be immediately dismissed."

George III held obstinately to the view of personal and private property as applied to his dominion or subjects. "He saw in the American war," says Lord Rosebery, "not vanished possibilities in the guidance of a new world, but the expropriation of an outlying estate, the loss of which diminished his importance." He regarded his ministers "as the mere weapons of a warfare waged on behalf of autocracy. . . . He converted the dogeship to which he succeeded into a real and to some extent a personal monarchy." But the modern statesman also sees better features in the portrait of the narrow and autocratic king. "To his sense of duty, mistaken as we may deem it, he was honestly faithful; he was frugal and pious and chaste. . . . His talents, like his morals, were not of an attractive kind, but they must not be underrated. He was the ablest political strategist of his day. He had to struggle against men of genius, supported by popular enthusiasm, on the one hand, and an impracticable autocracy, inured to supreme power, on the other. He had, during his reign, to deal with the elder Pitt and the younger Fox when they were the idols of the nation; with the haughty alliance of Grenville and Grey; with the close

oligarchy of Whig nobles that had encircled and enchained the throne, and with the turbulent democracy of Wilkes. He defeated and outwitted them all.”

Wesley's first political pamphlet was directed against John Wilkes, M.P., the editor of the *North Briton*, whose blundering arrest by the government made him a popular hero. Wesley says of himself that politics were beyond his province, but he uses “the privilege of an Englishman to speak his naked thoughts.” “I have no bias, one way or the other. I have no interest depending. I want no man's favor, having no hopes, no fears, from any man.” We may question if Wesley were unbiased, but of his disinterestedness there can be no doubt. He defends the character of the king, though later we find him opposed to his American policy. He sees that the rule of “King Wilkes” means the rule of “King Mob.” Wesley's pamphlet was published in 1768. Next year the celebrated *Letters of Junius* appeared in the *Public Advertiser*, and political excitement rose to fever heat. The attempt to tax the American colonies by the notorious Stamp Act—an infringement of the principle “no taxation without representation”—and the imposition of other obnoxious duties after its enforced repeal, was producing the ferment which resulted in the American War of Independence. On this topic we shall find Wesley writing a trenchant letter.



CHAPTER LXXXVI

Wesley's Conflict with Antinomian Heresy

"A COMFORTABLE PAIN."—A PREMATURE EPITAPH.—THE WORST OF ALL HERESIES.—"WHOLESOME WORDS" ON UNWHOLESOME THEORIES.—DISOWNED FANATICS.—THE CONSOLATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP.—BLACKWELL, THE BANKER.

"I PREACHED at Portarlington, though I was extremely ill, and it was a pain to me to speak; but it was a comfortable pain. I could from my heart praise God for his fatherly visitation," wrote Wesley in 1752. In Lancashire, some weeks before, after an exhausting day, he had slept in a cellar, and wrote: "My bed was considerably underground. . . . The closeness was more troublesome at first than the coolness, but I let in a little fresh air by breaking a pane of paper (put by way of glass) in the window, and then slept sound till morning." Then we find him visiting the sick in "cells underground, others in their garrets, half starved with cold and hunger." On a bitter November day in 1753 he is in an open chaise facing the wind—"high and piercing cold"—chilled to the bone, and, far from well, preaching and administering the sacrament to a large congregation crowding the chapel at Spitalfields; then obliged by cramp to leap from his bed at night and walk up and down his frosty room.

What wonder that we find him the next day shivering with fever, and shaken by a cough while preaching!

All the symptoms of a rapid decline followed, and Dr. Fothergill, the Quaker physician, told him that he must not stay in town; he prescribed "rest, asses' milk, and riding daily." He retired to Lewisham, near London, the home of



THE LIMES.

FROM AN OLD PRINT

Ebenezer Blackwell's house at Lewisham.

his friend Mr. Blackwell, the banker. On the night of his arrival, thinking, with his friends, that his days were numbered, "to prevent vile panegyric" he wrote his own epitaph:

Here lieth the body
of

JOHN WESLEY.

A brand plucked out of the burning:

Who died of consumption in the fifty-first year of his age.

Not leaving, after his debts were paid,

Ten pounds behind him:

Praying,

God be merciful to me, an unprofitable servant.

He ordered that this, if any, inscription should be placed on his tombstone.

Charles Wesley hurried to London to take the oversight of the society, but plainly told the members that, if his brother died, he could never fill his place. Whitefield was filled with sorrow, and wrote an affectionate letter to his old friend. But John rallied, and went to the Hot Wells, Bristol, where he spent four months in comparative retirement. Here he wrote his *Notes on the New Testament*. "A work," he says, "I should scarce ever have attempted had I not been so ill as not to be able to travel or preach, and yet so well as to be able to read and write." We shall find the *Notes* becoming one of the doctrinal standards of Methodism.

A far more serious trouble to Wesley than any personal affliction was the antinomianism which threatened his societies with mortal disease. He was ever awake to the dangers which arise from the perversions of evangelical doctrine. He saw, as Dr. Pope has expressed it, that there was "only a step between precious truth and perilous error here." "The antinomian proper," says the great Methodist theologian, "is one who treats the requirements of perfect holiness as met by Christ, and refuses to measure his conduct by any law whatever." Wesley turned with alarm from the Moravians, to whom he owed so much, as soon as he saw a tendency in some of their congregations to a perversion of their glorious doctrine of the righteousness of faith. He ceased to use the term "imputed righteousness" when he found "the immense hurt which the frequent use of this unnecessary phrase had done." "Much of his opposition to Calvinism," says Overton, "arose from suspicion of its ethical bearings." He carefully guarded his own doctrine of Christian perfection from this peril. He considered anti-

nomianism the worst of all heresies. Most strenuously and persistently did he teach that the profession of justification by faith should ever be tested by right conduct.

He was severe in his censure of what he calls the “ luscious ” style of a certain type of so-called evangelical preachers. Such a preacher was James Wheatley, whom he disowned in 1751. His preaching, says Wesley, was “ an unconnected rhapsody of unmeaning words, like Sir John Suckling’s

Verses, smooth and soft as cream,
In which was neither depth nor stream.”

Wesley considered it a reproach to Methodist congregations that Wheatley ever became a “ popular preacher,” and that others followed the example of his vicious style, branding those who differed from them as “ legal preachers, legal wretches.” Wesley contrasts the condition of the societies where this perverted Gospel was preached with that of the societies under the charge of sensible John Nelson, who fed them with wholesome food. He says in a private letter that among a certain class of hearers the term “ gospel ” has “ now become a mere cant word. I wish none of our society would use it. It has no determinative meaning. Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal, that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ or his blood, or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, ‘ What a fine Gospel sermon ! ’ Surely the Methodists have not so learned Christ.” When he wrote this antinomianism was taking strong hold of some Dissenting Churches.

James Wheatley went to Norwich, where he was unknown, soon gathered a large congregation, who built him a “ tabernacle,” and flourished greatly until he was again publicly convicted of crime. He fled from England, but returned

after a few years to "his dear lambs," to whom he preached until he lost his voice.

Charles Wesley went to Norwich in 1754 to try to counteract the evil effects of Wheatley's teaching. He preached with great power to about three thousand people around the door of the preaching room, and to a larger number near Hog Hill. A huge, black, grisly man, a tinker, who had been a champion of Wheatley, and had fought in many a riot, came to Charles Wesley and offered to do him similar service. The preacher thanked him for his kindness, gave him a book and a word of advice, and sent him away highly pleased. The Methodists, led by Charles Wesley, took the Lord's Supper at the cathedral. Mrs. Wesley was at Norwich during one fierce riot, accompanied by Mrs. Galatin, a tall and handsome lady, who attracted the unpleasant attentions of the mob; but Mrs. Wesley, being "a little lady," was quite overlooked.

"I would not advise to preach the law without the Gospel any more than the Gospel without the law," wrote John Wesley, referring to the so-called Gospel preaching which he disowned. "Undoubtedly both should be preached in their turns; yea, both at once, or both in one." And he sums up the Christian ethics taught by himself and John Nelson in these words: "God loves you; therefore love and obey him. Christ died for you; therefore die to sin. Christ is risen; therefore rise in the image of God. Christ liveth evermore; therefore live to God till you live with him in glory." "So we preached; and so you believed! This is the scriptural way, the Methodist way, the true way. God grant we may never turn therefrom, to the right hand or to the left."

In 1762-3 Wesley was again disappointed and pained by the extravagances of George Bell and others who followed

him. Two years before a glorious work of sanctification had spread through Yorkshire, London, and many parts of Ireland. All branches of the work of God revived and increased. But there were some who did not teach the doctrine of holiness as Wesley taught it. George Bell, who had been a corporal in the Life Guards, professed to be endowed with extraordinary spiritual gifts, held meetings of his own, and declared himself independent of the sacrament. He claimed the gift of prophecy, and declared that the world would come to an end on one certain day in February. There was a panic among the terrified people, who fled to the fields, fearing an earthquake. Bell was arrested and imprisoned, and recovered from his fanaticism to become a professed infidel and reformer. Maxfield had allied himself with Bell, and took two hundred members with him, afterward forming a congregation of his own.

Wesley was filled with grief, four hundred members being lost to the London society by this outburst of fanaticism. With great forbearance he dealt with those who had been infected by Bell's teaching, and addressed them in tender and searching pastorals.

In the midst of these trials Wesley was greatly comforted by the addition of John Fletcher to the circle of his personal friends. He also, as we have seen, found refuge from the storm, and rest during his illness, in the home of his Lewisham friend, Mr. Blackwell, whose house—still standing—was one of his favorite resorts. Wesley repaid the banker's kindnesses by many a faithful warning. In one letter he says that ever since he had known Blackwell he had observed in him "a real desire to please God, and to have a conscience void of offense. But, at the same time, I have observed you had many enemies. Perhaps one was a natural cheerfulness

of temper, which, though in itself it be highly desirable, yet may easily slide into an extreme. And, in this case, we know too well it may hurt us extremely. It may be another hindrance in your way has sometimes been a kind of shame, which prevented your executing good and commendable designs. Was it not owing to this that you, who had received such blessings by means of field-preaching, grew unwilling to attend it?" Blackwell was equally outspoken to Wesley.

When the crisis of his illness was past he wrote to the Blackwells from Bristol, "I must not delay writing to you, who have been the greatest instruments, in God's hands, of my recovery thus far."

To Mrs. Blackwell Charles Wesley paid a merited tribute:

So humble, affable, and meek,
Her gentle, inoffensive mind,
None ever heard that angel speak
A railing speech or word unkind.

Blackwell retired from Lombard Street in 1780, after about half a century of devotion to business. He was a man of fine religious character. Wesley tells us in one of his letters that a friend asked Blackwell, "Are you going to hear Mr. Wesley?" "No," was the answer; "I am going to hear God. I listen to Him, whoever preaches; or, otherwise, I lose all my labor."

Charles Wesley says:

His roughly honest soul abhorred
The polish smooth, the courtier's art,
While, free from guile, in every word
He spoke the language of the heart.

He pays a high tribute to the banker's generous charity:

And still, the more his wealth increased,
More treasure he laid up in heaven.



CHAPTER LXXXVII

Wesley's World-wide Parish in 1769

IN THE YEAR OF BONAPARTE'S BIRTH.—WESLEY'S ACCOUNT OF METHODISM.—NATHANIEL GILBERT IN THE WEST INDIES.—THE SOLDIERS OF GIBRALTAR.—NEWFOUNDLAND.—THE NEEDS OF AMERICA.—SOME PUNGENT LETTERS.

THE year 1769 provides a germ-cell from which many historical volumes might be evolved on European and American politics, science, art, industry, and religion. It was the year in which Napoleon Bonaparte was born—the typical “man of the world,” as Emerson calls him, “whose absorbing egotism was deadly to all other men.” What a strange contrast his character was to present to that of the great evangelist, who was this year busy with his transatlantic mission! England was in a ferment, for a petition against taxation came from the people of New York; Boston was occupied by British troops; the Letters of Junius were published; Wilkes was pounding at the Parliament which expelled him; mobs were shouting for “Liberty.” Deaf to all the clamor of terrestrial politics, scientific men were observing the transit of Venus, and Banks was recording the sun's distance from the earth. Captain Cook was exploring

Australasia, and an expedition sailed to seek the Northwest Passage. The first exhibition of pictures was held at the Royal Academy, with Sir Joshua Reynolds as the first president. Boulton and Watt, the great engineers, became partners ; and Arkwright's spinning machine, patented this year, was significant of the industrial changes which were to affect the masses of the people and the commerce of the world.

An important letter written by Wesley during this year gives us a reliable account of the position of Methodism. The letter has not hitherto found a place in Methodist history. It came into the hands of the late Dr. Osborn, and was sent by him to the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine in 1889. It is addressed to John Liden, a distinguished Swede, who was professor of history at Lund. He visited England for six months in 1769, and died in 1793, and his Journal was deposited in the library at Upsala with express orders that it should not be opened until after half a century. This Journal, into which Wesley's letter had been transcribed, was examined, along with other MSS., and reported upon by an English clergyman, the Rev. W. D. Macray, deputed by the British government to report on libraries in Sweden. This gentleman states that the Swedish professor paid great attention to matters connected with literature and religion ; but his most interesting and fullest notice is of John Wesley, whom he greatly admired. On Sunday, October 15, he heard him preach in the morning at Spitalfields and in the afternoon at the Foundry. In connection with these services he speaks of Charles Wesley and his hymns, and the heartiness with which they were sung. But the chief interest of his account lies in his incorporating an autograph paper sent him by "œlkswarden Mr. Wesley" in reply to questions ad-

dressed to him by Liden with regard to his system and mode of administration :

JOHN WESLEY TO PROFESSOR LIDEN.

November 16, 1769.

To answer those questions thoroughly would require a volume. It is partly done in the little tracts; on the points wherein they are defective I will add a few words as my time permits.

1. There are many thousand Methodists in Great Britain and Ireland which are not formed into societies. Indeed, none are but those (or rather a part of those) who are under the care of Mr. Wesley. These at present contain a little less than thirty thousand persons.

2. The places at which there is constant preaching (three or four times a week at least) are the Foundry, near Moorfields, the French Church (in West Street), near the Seven Dials (at these two places there is preaching every morning and evening), the French Church, in Spitalfields, the chapel in Snowsfields, Southwark, the chapel in Wapping, and one not far from Smithfield.

3. They have many schools for teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic, but only one for teaching the higher parts of learning. This is kept in Kingswood, near Bristol, and contains about forty scholars. These are all boarders, and might be abundantly more, but the house will not contain them. "The Rules of Kingswood School" give an account of the books read and the method pursued therein.

4. I believe some of the best preachers are James Morgan, Peter Jaco, Jos. Cownley, T. Simpson, John Helton, John Pawson, Alex. Mather, Tho. Olivers, Sam Levick, Duncan Wright, Jacob Rowell, Christopher Hopper, Dan Bunstead, Alexander McNab, and William Thompson. Each of these preachers has his food wherever he labors, and twelve pounds a year for clothes and other expenses. If he is married, he has ten pounds a year for his wife. This



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

FROM A WOODCUT.

THE FRENCH CHURCH, SPITALFIELDS.

Where the first covenant service was held.

money is raised by the voluntary contributions of the societies. It is by these likewise that the poor are assisted where the allowance fixed by the laws of the land does not suffice. Accordingly the stewards of the societies in London distribute seven or eight pounds weekly among the poor.

5. Mr. Whitefield is a Calvinist, Messrs. Wesley are not ; this is the only material difference between them. And this has continued without any variation ever since Mr. Whitefield adopted those opinions. The consequences of that difference are touched upon in the letter sent two or three years ago to the persons named therein.

6. There are only three Methodist societies in America : one at Philadelphia, one at New York, and one twelve miles from it. There are five preachers there ; two have been at New York for some years ; three are lately gone over. Mr. Whitefield has published a particular account of everything relative to the Orphan House (in Georgia).

7. The most eminent writers against the Methodists are the late Bishop of London (Dr. Gibson), Dr. Church, the Bishop of Gloucester (Dr. Warburton), and Bishop Lavington. Bishops Gibson and Lavington were thoroughly convinced of their mistake before they died. I believe Dr. Church was so too. None, I think, but Mr. Perronet has wrote *for* the *Methodists*.

8. No Moravians belong to their societies. They have no considerable settlements in England but at London, Bedford, and Pudsey, a little town near Leeds, in Yorkshire.

Wesley makes no reference here to the fact that in 1760 Methodism had been introduced into the West Indies. Nathaniel Gilbert, a lawyer, and speaker of the House of Assembly in Antigua, visiting England, was present with two of his female slaves at a service in his own house at Wandsworth when Wesley preached there in 1758. The hearts of the master and his slaves were touched by the Gospel. Wesley baptized the two slaves ; one of whom, he says, was the first regenerated African he had ever seen, and he asks, " Shall not His saving health be made known to all nations ? " Gilbert, on his return to Antigua, began meetings in his own house. Then he became a lay preacher. That the speaker of the Legislative Assembly should preach at all excited surprise ; " that he should become a preacher to negroes excited contempt." He founded a Methodist society of two hundred members and corresponded with Wes-

ley, who sent him counsel respecting his work. At his death there seemed to be no one qualified to take his place but two slaves, named Mary Allen and Sophia Campbell, who kept the remnants of the society together until a Methodist shipwright from Chatham arrived, in 1778. He worked at his craft by day, preached at night, and in 1783 built the first Methodist chapel erected in the torrid zone. Eight years later Dr. Coke and his three missionaries were cast upon the shore, and the famous West Indian Missions were organized.

At Gibraltar, also, Methodism had been planted. British soldiers were the preachers, men of the Second Regiment and "Royal Scots," who held services daily and led six class meetings. Lord Cornwallis, the commanding officer, issued a garrison order, in 1769, as follows: "Whereas divers soldiers and inhabitants assemble themselves every evening to prayer, it is the governor's positive order that no person whatever presume to molest them, nor go into their meeting to behave indecently there." In Newfoundland, Lawrence Caughland, amid bitter persecution, had been preaching since 1765, and gathered a society around him.

The story of the labors of Philip Embury, Barbara Heck, and Captain Webb in New York and of Robert Strawbridge in Maryland belongs to the American section of this history. It must suffice to note here that the first chapel in New York had been built in John Street, and Philip Embury had preached the first sermon in its pulpit, constructed by his own hands, on October 30, 1768. Robert Strawbridge's work in Maryland, though as yet unknown to Wesley, was making rapid progress.

Then came the call for further help from England. Dr. Wrangel, a missionary to the Swedish emigrants in Pennsylvania, appointed by the Swedish government, earnestly en-

treated Wesley to send one of his preachers. "October 14, 1768," writes Wesley in his Journal, "I dined at Bristol with Dr. Wrangel, one of the King of Sweden's chaplains, who has spent several years in Pennsylvania. His heart seemed to be greatly united to the American Christians; and he strongly pleaded for our sending some of our preachers to help them, multitudes of whom are as sheep without a shepherd."

Thomas Bell wrote from Charleston, S.C.: "Mr. Wesley says the first message of the preachers is to the lost sheep of England. And are there none in America? They have strayed from America into the wild woods here, and they are running wild after this world. They are drinking their wine in bowls, and are jumping and dancing, and serving the devil in the groves and under the green trees. And are not these lost sheep? And will none of the preachers come here? Where is Mr. Brownfield? Where is John Pawson? Where is Nicholas Manners? Are they living, and will they not come?"

The American appeal for preachers was presented to the Bristol Conference of 1768, but the consideration of it was postponed until the next year. The financial difficulties which it was necessary to face if Methodism was to be extended are suggested by Wesley's characteristic letters to Christopher Hopper:

"DEAR CHRISTOPHER: I see no help for it. What must be must be. You must go point-blank to York, Leeds, and Bradford. Our rich men subscribe twenty shillings a year. And neither Brother Boardman, Brisco, Bumstead, nor Olivers can move them. They want a hard-mouthed man. Get you gone in a trice. Show them the difference. I beg of you either mend them or end them. Let this lumber be removed from among us.

"I am ever yours, J. WESLEY."

In another letter Wesley says: "I constitute you, Christopher Hopper by name, Lord President of the North. Enter upon your province—Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Durham, Yorkshire, and Lincolnshire—without delay. Pray dispatch letters to Jacob Rowell, Jo. Heslop, Rd. Boardman, and your other deputies without loss of time, and quicken them to put forth all their strength, and make one push for all. But hold! John Fenwick writes to me, 'I will give £25!' Do not abate him the five! No drawing back! I think the time is come for rolling away this reproach from us.

"Your thought concerning the preachers is a noble one. If fifty of them set such an example, giving a little out of their little, such an instance would have an effect upon many. Let one stir up another. Spare no pains. Write east, west, north, and south. You have a ready mind and a ready pen, and it cannot be used in a better cause."

The memorable Conference of 1769 must have a chapter by itself.



CHAPTER LXXXVIII

"A Pressing Call from Our Brethren in New York"

THE HISTORIC CONFERENCE IN THE "OLD BOGGART HOUSE."—RICHARD BOARDMAN AND JOSEPH PILMOOR.—LAST SERVICES IN ENGLAND.—WELCOME TO AMERICA.—WILL WESLEY ALSO GO?—THE CIRCUIT OF AMERICA.

THE historic Conference of 1769 met in the "Old Boggart House." This was the name of the first Leeds Chapel, built in the "boggart," or ghost field. John Nelson had helped to build it in 1751, and when work was over he used to take off his apron and preach to the workmen. The walls of the chapel were built around Matthew Chippendale's house, which had served as a preaching room. The materials of the old house were then thrown out of the windows of the new one. The upper part contained rooms for the preachers visiting Leeds; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wesley and many others resting there. At the Conference of 1769 the preachers filled the deep gallery and Mr. Wesley sat in the seat of the principal singer, for there was no platform.

"What is contributed toward the debt?" was question X. Answer: "£2,458 19s. 7d." XI: "How was this distributed?" The account follows. XII: "What is reserved for contingent expenses?" Answer: "Nothing."

This was not an encouraging introduction to question XIII: "We have a pressing call from our brethren at New York (who have built a preachinghouse) to come over and help them. Who is willing to go?"

A young man, apparently far gone in consumption, rose up in his place in the gallery and said, "If you will send



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

THE OLD BOGGART HOUSE, LEEDS.

FROM A WOODCUT.

Where the Conference of 1769 was held, in which the first Wesleyan missionaries volunteered for America.

me, sir, I will go in the name of the Lord." Immediately another young man, also in the gallery, got up and said, "Sir, if you will send me, I will go with Brother Pilmoor." This second volunteer was Richard Boardman.

Then came question XIV: "What can we do further in token of our brotherly love?" Answer: "Let us now make a collection among ourselves." (This was immediately done.) Question XV: "What is the whole debt remaining?" Answer: "Between five and six thousand pounds." So with a heavy debt on one hand and no reserve for contingent expenses on the other, the great American Mission began in the British Conference.

The Conference, "and," says Wesley, "a more loving one we never had," closed after four days' sessions. It represented 46 circuits and 28,263 members. The closing day was an especially blessed one. "At the conclusion," says Wesley, "all the preachers were melted down while they were singing those lines for me:

Thou who so long hast saved me here,
A little longer save;
Till, freed from sin, and freed from fear,
I sink into a grave:
Till glad I lay this body down
Thy servant, Lord, attend;
And O! my life of mercies crown
With a triumphant end.

The Conference now attracted the attention of the public press, and the Leeds Intelligencer of August 8 announces that "for a week past the Rev. Mr. John Wesley has held a kind of visitation, but what they call a Conference, in this town, with several hundred of his preachers from most parts of Great Britain and Ireland, when he settled their several routes for the succeeding year, etc., and after collecting a large sum of money for the purpose of sending out missionaries to America, he yesterday set out for Manchester." In Lloyd's Evening Post of May 26, 1769, the public were sarcastically informed that the following promotions in the Church were about to be declared: "The Rev. G. Whitefield, Archbishop of Boston; Rev. W. Romaine, Bishop of New York; Rev. J. Wesley, Bishop of Pennsylvania; Rev. W. Madan, Bishop of the Carolinas; Rev. W. Shirley, Bishop of Virginia; and Rev. C. Wesley, Bishop of Nova Scotia." It was added that, as his majesty would soon have the livings of these gentlemen at his disposal, he intended to provide for Dr. Dodd and other court celebrities anxious to fill important places.

Richard Boardman was an Irishman, who had been a traveling preacher for six years, and was now thirty-one years of age. Wesley told him that he must start at once, in order to sail by the ship Mary and Elizabeth, in which, as it belonged to friends, he would get a cheap passage.



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH.

BARNARD CASTLE CHAPEL, 1765.

Richard Boardman preached here, 1768, and his wife and child are buried in the churchyard.

Joseph Pilmoor at sixteen had been converted under the preaching of Wesley, and was educated by him at Kingswood School. He had "traveled" four years. Lockwood, in his *Western Pioneers*, quotes from some notes of Pilmoor's personal friend, Mr. Latimer, which, at a later date, bring the man before us. He was a man of stately presence, with well-knit frame and firm step. His dress at this period comprised a broad-brimmed hat, shad-belly coat, with breeches and knee buckles, white stockings, and a profusion of hair which hung in graceful locks, and gave to him in declining

years a patriarchal appearance. He was a remarkably handsome man, and Mr. Latimer describes him as "a choice young man, and a goodly; and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he. From his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people." A voice whose volume and melody were perfectly marvelous enabled him to address vast multitudes with ease, and showed that in his case the good "trumpet" and the "certain sound" were happily united. Portraits of both missionaries appear in a later volume of this work.

Whitefield was about to start on his seventh and last voyage to America, and having heard of the mission of the two young Methodists, he invited them to visit him at Tottenham Court Road. Well knowing the American climate and people, he made suggestions of great practical value, "and treated us," observes Pilmoor, "with all the kindness and tenderness of a father in Christ. Difference in sentiment made no difference in love and affection. He prayed heartily for us, and 'commended us to God and to the word of his grace.' So we parted in love, hoping soon to meet where parting is no more."

They once more heard Charles Wesley preach at Spitalfields and took part in the Lord's Supper. "God was remarkably present among the people," remarks Pilmoor, "and it was truly a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. At five," he continues, "I preached in the Foundry to a numerous congregation, with great enlargedness of heart, and was abundantly blessed in my own soul. Mr. Charles met the society, and afterward sent for Mr. Boardman and me into his room, where he spoke freely and kindly to us about our voyage and the important business in which we had engaged; he sent us forth with his blessing in

the name of the Lord. This was of great advantage to us, as it afforded the pleasing reflection that we had not acted contrary to the mind of our brethren and fathers in Christ; we had (what we believed to be) a call from God; we had the approbation and authority of three godly clergymen of the Church of England, and, likewise, the authority of more than a hundred preachers of the Gospel who are laboring day and night to save souls from destruction and advance the kingdom of Christ. Hence we concluded we had full power, according to the New Testament, to preach the everlasting Gospel and do all possible good to mankind."

John Wesley gave them £20 for their passage, and on August 21 they embarked at Gravesend. Their voyage lasted nine weeks, and on October 21 they landed at the village of Gloucester Point, on the Delaware, six miles below Philadelphia. They were welcomed in the Quaker City by Captain Webb and a society of about one hundred members. Pilmoor began his mission by preaching from the steps of the old courthouse. On Sunday evening, he tells Wesley, he preached on the common, with the stand for the horse races as a pulpit, to a congregation of four thousand people. "Blessed be God for field-preaching! There seems to be a great and effectual door opening in this country, and I hope many souls will be gathered in. When I parted with you at Leeds I found it very hard. I have reason to bless God that I ever saw your face. And, though I am well-nigh four thousand miles from you, I have inward fellowship with your spirit. Even while I am writing my heart flows with love to you and all our dear friends at home."

Boardman, after preaching in Philadelphia, started for the north. Passing through a town in New Jersey, he saw barracks, and inquired of a soldier if there were any Methodists

there. "Yes, we are all Methodists," was the prompt reply. "That is, we would be glad to hear a Methodist preacher." The trooper spread the news among his comrades, and soon the inn where the evangelist had stopped was surrounded. "Where can I preach?" he inquired. "We will get you the Presbyterian church," they replied. The bell was quickly ringing, calling the whole town to the service. A "great company" assembled, and were "much affected" by the sudden appeal. The next day Boardman hastened to New York, and was soon writing to Wesley: "Our house contains about seven hundred people. About a third of those who attend get in. The rest are glad to hear without. There appears such a willingness in the Americans to hear the word as I never saw before. They have no preaching in some parts of the back settlements. I doubt not but an effectual door will be opened among them. O may the Most High now give his Son the heathen for his inheritance! The number of blacks that attend the preaching affects me much."

Wesley evidently felt strongly drawn to America, and if the way had been clear, he might have gone there. In a letter to Walter Sellon, written soon after he had received Boardman's letter, he says: "It is not yet determined if I should go to America or not. I have been importuned for some time; but *nil sat firmi video*. I must have a clear call before I am at liberty to leave Europe." Referring to this period, Mr. Tyerman remarks: "Wesley had nearly arrived at the age of threescore years and ten; but if his way had opened, he would have bounded off across the Atlantic with as little anxiety as he was accustomed to trot to the hospitable Perronet home at Shoreham." The obstacles, however, were insurmountable. There was no one during his absence to take his place as superintendent general of the societies in

Britain, and to this must be added the strong objections of the people to let him go.

"If I go to America," said he, "I must do a thing which I hate as bad as I hate the devil."

"What is that?" asked his friend.

"I cannot keep a secret," he answered; meaning that he must conceal his purpose, otherwise his societies would interfere and effectually prevent his going.

Twelve months later he wrote to Mrs. Marston, of Worcester: "If I live till spring, and should have a clear, pressing call, I am as ready to embark for America as for Ireland. All places are alike to me. I am attached to none in particular. Wherever the work of our Lord is to be carried on that is my place for to-day. And we live only for to-day. It is not our part to take thought for to-morrow."

Rumors spread, both in America and England, that Wesley had decided to go and "turn bishop;" and he wrote later to Walter Sellon: "Dear Walter, you do not understand your information right. Observe, 'I am going to America to turn bishop.' You are to understand it in *sensu composito*. I am not to be a bishop till I am in America. While I am in Europe, therefore, you have nothing to fear; but as soon as ever you hear of my being landed in Philadelphia it will be time for your apprehension to revive. It is true some of our preachers would not have me stay so long, but I keep my old rule: *Festina lente*."

America appears as a circuit in the stations at the Conference of 1770, the entry being, "America—Joseph Pilmoor, Richard Boardman, Robert Williams, John King." A year later we read: "Our brethren in America call aloud for help. Who are willing to go over and help them?" Francis Asbury and Richard Wright were sent. "No one

could foresee," says Professor Green, "that one of those two, a young man of six-and-twenty summers, tall in person, grave in demeanor, was destined to become an apostle whose labors would equal those of any servant of the cross whose name is inscribed on the rolls of the Church since the apostolic age."

While Boardman and Pilmoor were on their stormy voyage Whitefield also was crossing the Atlantic, in the ship *Friendship*. He arrived on the last day of November, and "had come to die," says Stevens, "in the great American field which he had so laboriously prepared for Wesley's missionaries." We must pause to tell the story of his later labors and death.



CHAPTER LXXXIX

Whitefield's Return from Heaven's Gate

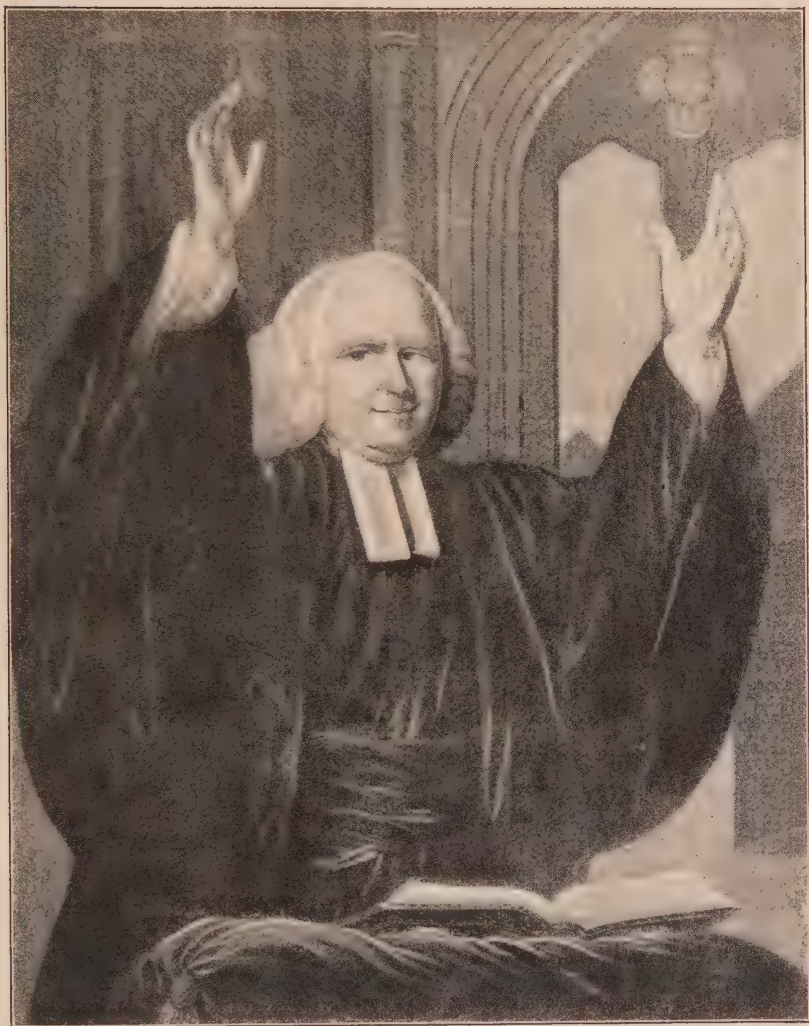
WHITEFIELD'S DOMESTIC LIFE.—BACK FROM HEAVEN'S GATE.—A LITERARY WAR.—HARVARD COLLEGE.—A NOBLE REVENGE.—THE VOICE OF THE STORM.—RANGING IN THE AMERICAN WOODS.—THE GREAT AWAKENING.

WHITEFIELD was married in 1741 to a widow, whom he describes to a Scotch friend as "neither rich in fortune nor beautiful as to her person, but a true child of God." Berridge, the bachelor Vicar of Everton, wrote to Lady Huntingdon at a later date: "No trap so mischievous to the field-preacher as wedlock. . . . Matrimony has quite maimed poor Charles, and might have spoiled John and George if a wise Master had not graciously sent them a brace of ferrets." This remark, and some unfavorable comments of Cornelius Winter, who was a youthful student in Whitefield's house for a short time, probably led Southey to state that Whitefield's marriage was not a happy one. But Whitefield's own letters contain many affectionate references to his wife, and when, in 1768, he preached her funeral sermon he praised her many virtues. Wesley calls her "a woman of candor and humanity." Perhaps her "candor" was too corrective of the faults of young Winter. That she pos-

sessed common sense and courage was evidenced three years after her marriage, when she accompanied her husband to Georgia. Their ship was threatened by a French gunboat, and the decks prepared for action. Whitefield confesses that he was "naturally a coward," and his first impulse was to retreat to a place of safety below, but, feeling ashamed, he roused himself, and for the first time in his life "beat up to arms by a warm exhortation." His wife "set about making cartridges," and helped to make all things "ready for the fire and smoke which did not come." At another time, when a mob surrounded her husband, and stones began to fly, and the preacher began to fear, she, standing by his side, pulled his gown and cried with genuine heroism, "Now, George, play the man for God!" The indefatigable industry of Tyerman finds no evidence in proof that the marriage was an unhappy one. Their only child, a son, died at the age of four months, in the house in which Whitefield was born—The Bell Inn, Gloucester—and was "laid," says Whitefield, "in the church where I was baptized, first communicated, and first preached." This loss was a great sorrow to him, for he had been confident that the child was to succeed him as a preacher.

For thirty-one years, from the date of his conversion (1739) to his death, in 1770, Whitefield traveled and preached with such consuming energy that the attempt to follow him produces a sensation of breathlessness. In 1744 he made his third visit to America, remaining four years; his fourth visit was in 1751, less than one year; the fifth in 1754, a little over a year; the sixth in 1763, lasting about two years; his last in 1769.

His American friends at Portsmouth, N. H. (one of whom was Colonel Pepperell, the hero of Louisbourg), ex-



PAINTED BY HONE.

FROM THE MEZZOTINT BY GRENWOODE.

THE REVEREND GEORGE WHITEFIELD, A.M.

Chaplain to the Countess of Huntingdon.

pected his death during a severe illness in 1744, but when the hour of service came he suddenly exclaimed, "By the help of God I will go and preach, and then come home and die." With great difficulty he reached the pulpit to bear what he thought would be his dying testimony to the truth, and to the invisible realities of another world. After an hour's preaching he was prostrate, and lying on a bed before the fire, heard his friends say, "He is gone!" He rallied, however, and soon after a poor negro woman sat down on the ground, looked earnestly in his face, and said: "Master, you just go to heaven's gate, but Jesus said, 'Get you down, get you down; you must not come here yet. Go first and call more poor negroes.'"

He became involved in a literary war. Some of the Presbyterian and Congregationalist ministers opposed him, as well as Episcopalians. He sometimes provoked them by his rash and indiscriminate criticism of "unconverted ministers." His replies to their sermons and pamphlets were not always wise, but he confesses that he was wrong when he said, "Many, nay, most, of the New England preachers did not experimentally know Christ." The faculty of Harvard College denounced his "arrogance and rashness," his extempore preaching, and itinerancy. He defended himself by quoting President Holyoake, who had said in a sermon on the degeneracy of the times: "Alas! how is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed! We have lost our first love; and, though religion is still in fashion with us, it is evident the power of it is greatly decayed." He closes with the frank words, "At the same time I ask public pardon for any rash word I have dropped, or anything I have written or done amiss." Twenty-nine years afterward, when Harvard College was destroyed by fire, and while the divinity pro-

fessor who had attacked him with relentless severity still occupied the chair, Whitefield, forgetful of the past, did his utmost in begging books for the new library. Four years later the president and fellows entered a minute in the records thanking him for procuring large benefactions for the college.

In England Whitefield had formed societies and instituted associations of preachers almost without intending it, but in America he refrained from this. He told the faculty of Harvard College that he had "no intention of setting up a party for himself." Some of his converts, in his absence, had formed a few separate congregations, but this was not done with his help or approval. Under illiterate but pious preachers some of these "Separatists" and "New Lights" existed in organized churches for many years after his death, and some of them warmly welcomed Wesley's preachers; but they were never numerous.

Whitefield's influence at Boston was remarkable. Belcher says that on one occasion he was preaching on the wonders of creation, providence, and redemption, when a violent tempest of thunder and lightning came on. In the midst of the sermon it obtained to so alarming a height that the congregation sat in almost breathless awe. The preacher closed his notebook, and, stepping to one of the wings of the desk, fell on his knees, and with much feeling and fine taste repeated:

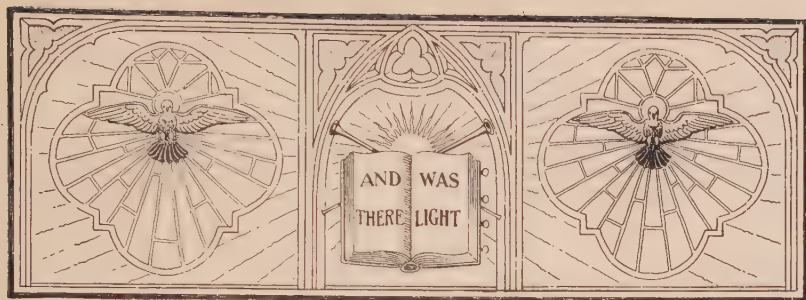
Hark! The Eternal rends the sky!
A mighty voice before him goes—
A voice of music to his friends,
But threatening thunder to his foes:
Come, children, to your Father's arms;
Hide in the chambers of my grace
Till the fierce storm be overblown,
And my revenging fury cease.

"Let us devoutly sing, to the praise and glory of God, this hymn: Old Hundred." The whole congregation instantly rose and poured forth the sacred song, in which they were nobly accompanied by the organ, in a style of pious grandeur and heartfelt devotion that was probably never surpassed. By the time the hymn was finished the storm was hushed, and the sun, bursting forth, showed through the window to the enraptured assembly a magnificent and brilliant arch of peace. The preacher resumed the desk and his discourse with this apposite quotation: "Look upon the rainbow; praise him that made it. Very beautiful it is in the brightness thereof. It compasseth the heaven about with a glorious circle, and the hands of the Most High have bended it." The remainder of the service was well calculated to sustain that elevated feeling which had been produced; and the benediction with which the good man dismissed the flock was universally received with streaming eyes and hearts overflowing with tenderness and gratitude.

We find him, on his way to Philadelphia, preaching, by means of an interpreter, to some of Brainerd's converted Indians. Then he is engaged for three months in attending to the affairs of his orphanage, which, "like the burning bush, has flourished unconsumed." In Maryland he is "ranging and hunting in the American woods after poor sinners." In Virginia he encourages a congregation which has been awakened by the reading of a volume of his sermons. Again, he is prostrated by fever. Later he writes from North Carolina: "I am now hunting in these ungospelized wilds for poor, lost sinners. It is pleasant work, though my body is weak and crazy. Pray for me as a dying man; but O pray that I may not go off as a snuff. I would fain die blazing, not with human glory, but with love of Jesus." He visited the Ber-

mudas in 1748 to recover health, but he labored the whole time, and the people, spontaneously, gave him £100 for his orphanage. The news reached England that he was dead; and the Gentleman's Magazine for May, in its List of Deaths, had the following: "April: Rev. Mr. Whitefield, the famous itinerant preacher, and founder of the Methodists in Georgia."

The time spent in Whitefield's second and third visits to America covered the entire period of what has been termed "the Great Awakening," with the exception of the religious movement at Northampton in 1734. In the vicinity of Boston not fewer than twenty ministers acknowledged Whitefield as the means of their conversion; and in other parts of the country his protest against an unconverted ministry bore fruit. In the churches of New England alone from thirty to forty thousand persons were added permanently to their membership, and multitudes of unconverted members experienced a saving change. We must not regard all these as Whitefield's converts, but he was a leading agent in the wonderful movement. He founded no society or church across the seas, but for his heart and tongue of fire all the churches praise God to this day.



CHAPTER XC

Whitefield and the American Colleges

GOVERNOR BELCHER AND BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.—WHITEFIELD'S AMERICAN FRIENDS.—“FATHER ABRAHAM, WHOM HAVE YOU IN HEAVEN?”
—LATER HISTORY OF THE ORPHAN HOUSE.—WHITEFIELD'S VIEW OF SLAVERY.

WHITEFIELD was deeply attached to the transatlantic colonies, and did his utmost in England to promote their interests. One of his friends was the Hon. Jonathan Belcher, governor of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and later of New Jersey, who had become deeply interested in the recently chartered College of New Jersey (now Princeton University). Whitefield too was greatly interested in this institution, advocated its claims in Scotland, and urged Governor Belcher to come over, or send a deputation, to appeal for help to the General Assembly. Three years later two gentlemen were sent. Whitefield presented them to the Countess of Huntingdon, preached sermons for the college, obtained signatures to a recommendation of Governor Belcher's scheme for an enlarged charter, and wrote letters about it in all directions.

Some time before the charter was obtained for the New Jersey college Benjamin Franklin was proposing to found a college in Philadelphia, for which he begged £2,000. A

meetinghouse which had been built for Whitefield was transferred by the trustees to the new academy on condition that a heavy debt remaining on the building be paid, the hall kept open for occasional preachers, and a free school maintained for children. Thus it came to pass that in Whitefield's meetinghouse, and by his approval, the University of Pennsylvania was established by Benjamin Franklin, a member of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania. In a letter to Whitefield on the subject we find some characteristic moralizing. He is glad to hear that Whitefield is preaching to the aristocracy: "If you can gain them to a good and exemplary life, wonderful changes will follow in the manners of the lower ranks; for *ad exemplum regis*, etc. On this principle Confucius, the famous Eastern reformer, proceeded. When he first saw his country sunk in vice, and wickedness of all kinds triumphant, he applied himself first to the grandees; and having by his doctrine won them to the cause of virtue, the commons followed in multitudes. The mode has a wonderful influence on mankind; and there are numbers who, perhaps, fear less the being in hell than out of the fashion. Our more Western reformatations began with the ignorant mob; and when numbers of them were gained interest and party views drew in the wise and great. Where both methods are used reformatations are likely to be more speedy. O that some method could be found to make them lasting! He who discovers this will, in my opinion, deserve more, ten thousand times, than the inventor of the longitude."

Franklin wrote to Whitefield again in 1750 on the subject of religious teaching in the new academy. Whitefield was not quite satisfied with the proposal that "the youth be taught some public religion, and the excellency of the Christian religion in particular." He wished for a more

definite scheme. He suggested also that special attention should be given to oratory, to prepare young men "for the pulpit, the bar, or any other profession whatever." "If a fund could be raised," wrote the Bachelor of Arts of Oxford, remembering his own early struggles, "for those of the poorer sort who appear to have promising abilities, I think it would greatly answer the design proposed. It has often been found that some of our brightest men in Church and State have arisen from an obscure condition." The general proposal met with his enthusiastic support; and Tyerman well remarks that his long letter is interesting as revealing his connection with the founding of one of the oldest and most important colleges in America, the University of Pennsylvania.

Whitefield's old friend, the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, and the famous Virginia preacher, the Rev. Samuel Davies, went to England in 1753 to obtain subscriptions for the college to be erected at Princeton. The Presbyterian churches in six colonies were looking for their supply of ministers from this college. Whitefield introduced the strangers to the Marquis of Lothian and the Presbyterians of Scotland, and they returned with funds which, Dr. Hodge says, "amply enabled the trustees" to erect the building and procure professors. Before returning to America his friends heard Whitefield preach in the Tabernacle to a densely crowded congregation, and Davies wrote: "Though the discourse was incoherent, it seemed to me better calculated to do good to mankind than all the accurate, languid discourses I have ever heard."

When Whitefield visited Georgia in 1754 he was glad to find that civil government had been substituted for the military régime which had existed from the founding of the

colony. His first manager at Bethesda, James Habersham, now a merchant of Savannah, was appointed provincial secretary. "I wish you joy of your new honor," writes Whitefield. "May the King of kings enable you to discharge your trust as becomes a good patriot, subject, and Christian!" At Boston again the congregation thronged the chapels in the early morning, and on one occasion the crowd at the door was so great that Whitefield was helped in through a window and carried to the pulpit. In Rhode Island we find him writing, "I have a fourteen-hundred-mile ride before me; but nil desperandum; Christo duce, auspice Christo." He made primeval forests ring with his songs of praise. In Maryland he finds he has ridden two thousand miles and preached two hundred and thirty times.

Between his fifth and sixth American tours he collected large sums in England for the distressed Protestants in Germany and for the sufferers by the great fire in Boston in 1760. We have already referred to his exertions on behalf of Harvard College library, burned in 1764. His was a truly "catholic spirit." Belcher relates a story which has assumed various forms since Whitefield's death. On one occasion, when preaching from the balcony of the courthouse in Philadelphia, in an apostrophe, he exclaimed: "Father Abraham, whom have you in heaven; any Episcopalians? 'No.' Any Presbyterians? 'No.' Any Baptists? 'No.' Any Methodists, Seceders, or Independents? 'No, no!' Why, whom have you there? 'We don't know those names here. All who are here are Christians.' O, is that the case? Then, God help me! and God help us all to forget party names and to become Christians in deed and truth."

Whitefield now proposed to add a college to his Orphan House, and his plan received the approval of the House of

Assembly and the governor of Georgia. He did not live to do more than launch his scheme. By his will he bequeathed the Orphan House estate and his slaves to Lady Huntingdon. She sent out a master, the Rev. John Crosse, afterward Vicar of Bradford, and the Rev. Mr. Piercy, rector of St. Paul's, Charleston, was appointed president of the Orphan House. Trevecca students came out as missionaries to the Indians. The countess's own housekeeper was sent to regulate household affairs, and the work prospered. But in 1773 Francis Asbury sadly writes from New York, July 2: "The news is arrived that Mr. W's Orphan House is burned down—whether by accident or design is not known. Some say it was by lightning. The wings are left standing; but the rest of the edifice, with all it contained, is destroyed."

The war with England prevented the restoration of the historic building. Richard Reece, writing in 1825, says that in 1800 a Methodist preacher, Mr. Lee, found the two unburned wings fast decaying. In one of them lived a family of whites, in a part of the other a family of negro slaves; the remainder being converted into a stable. The General Assembly of Georgia had taken possession of the whole estate, and it was rented for thirty dollars a year.

In 1802 a portion of the academy was purchased and fitted up as a union chapel, and another fragment rented for a Sunday school. "The ruins," writes Dr. Stevens, "the only memorial of a great and benevolent scheme, were also the memento of the great Methodist evangelist. If the ostensible design of the institution had failed, it had accomplished a greater result which was destined never to fail; for it had been the center of American attraction to its founder, had prompted his thirteen passages across the Atlantic, and had thus led to those extraordinary travels and labors, from Georgia to

Maine, which quickened with spiritual life the Protestantism of the continent, and opened the career of Methodism in the western hemisphere."

From the Christian standpoint of to-day Whitefield's approval of slavery appears one of the most perplexing facts in his life. He was himself a slave owner, and he writes in defense of slavery, sincerely adopting the fallacious arguments

JAMAICA, J.

Know all Men, by these presents, That
I Thomas Jackson of the Town and Parish of
Port Royal in the County of Surry and Island
of Jamaica Merchant
 for and in consideration of the sum of *One Hundred Pounds*
 current money of
 Jamaica, to *him* in hand paid, at and before the sealing and delivery of these presents by
Lionel Beale of the said Parish County and Island
Master Shipwright the receipt whereof I do hereby
 acknowledge, have bargained and sold, and by these presents do bargain, sell, and deliver unto the
 said *Lionel Beale his Heirs and assigns a Certain*
Negro Male Slave named Charles

Facsimile of title deed relating to the sale of a slave in the British colony of Jamaica.

of his day: "As to the lawfulness of keeping slaves I have no doubt, since I hear of some that were bought with Abraham's money and some that were born in his house. I also cannot help thinking that some of those servants mentioned by the apostles in their epistles were or had been slaves. It is plain that the Gibeonites were doomed to perpetual slavery; and, though liberty is a sweet thing to such as are born free, yet to those who never saw the sweets of it slavery, perhaps, may not be so irksome. However this be, it is plain, to a

demonstration, that hot countries cannot be cultivated without negroes."

These opinions did not imply "the same degree of moral insensibility as it would necessarily argue at the present day," says Overton, "but there were many, even in Whitefield's time, John Wesley among the number, who thoroughly appreciated the unchristian character of the system." General Oglethorpe had declared, "Slavery is against the Gospel as well as against the fundamental law of England;" and the original trustees of the Georgian colony interdicted the introduction of slaves, "We refused as trustees to make a law permitting such a horrid crime." Whitefield was always kind to his slaves, and anxious to promote their spiritual welfare. He did not, however, like Oglethorpe and Wesley, rise above the prevalent sentiment of his times, and in this he resembled the large majority of the American ministers who were his friends. But a better day was dawning, and the noble testimony of the Quaker abolitionists was already working like leaven on both sides of the Atlantic. When Whitefield died Wilberforce was a boy at school, brooding over the subject of the letter he wrote to a York paper, when he was fourteen years of age, "in condemnation of the odious traffic in human flesh;" the removal of which was afterward the main object of his life. In this noble purpose he was to be encouraged by John Wesley.



CHAPTER XCI

Whitefield's Last Years in England

THE FAMOUS TABERNACLE IN TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD.—"THE DEVIL'S CASTAWAY."—EXHAUSTING LABORS.—CAPTAIN JOSS, CAPTAIN SCOTT, AND ROWLAND HILL.—"THE LAST GLIMMERING OF AN EXPIRING TAPER."

WHITEFIELD'S TABERNACLE in Tottenham Court Road, of which we have here an old print, was opened in 1756. Three years later it was enlarged and the dome erected. Beneath it were vaults, "where," Whitefield used to say to his somewhat bigoted congregation, "I intend to be buried, and Messrs. John and Charles Wesley shall also be buried there. We will all lie together. You will not let them enter your chapel while they are alive. They can do you no harm when they are dead." The Tabernacle became the mother sanctuary of many congregations, and many distinguished preachers occupied its pulpit: De Courcy, Berridge, Shirley, Percy (chaplain to General Washington), Rowland Hill, Torial Joss, Edward Parsons, of York, Matthew Wilks, and many others. For a century it was Whitefield's one memorial in London; the original building and its successor have disappeared. A new building, called the Whitefield Memorial

Tabernacle, stands on their site, having at the head of its corner the original stone placed by Whitefield in 1756.

Whitefield wished his new chapel to be connected with the Established Church, but the difficulties of securing this proved so great that he was driven to avail himself of the Act of Toleration, and license it as a Dissenting meetinghouse.

He was not greatly distressed by the necessity of thus becoming the minister of a Dissenting chapel. "Thanks be to



FROM A CONTEMPORARY PRINT.

WHITEFIELD'S TABERNACLE, 1756.

Jesus," wrote he, "for that liberty which we have." With some of the leading Dissenting ministers both in England and America he was now on terms of close friendship.

Dr. Watts, who had rebuked Dr. Doddridge for preaching in Whitefield's old wooden Tabernacle in Moorfields, had died in 1748. Before he passed away Whitefield visited the "patriarch" and tenderly inquired "how he found himself."

"I am one of Christ's waiting servants," replied the dying doctor.

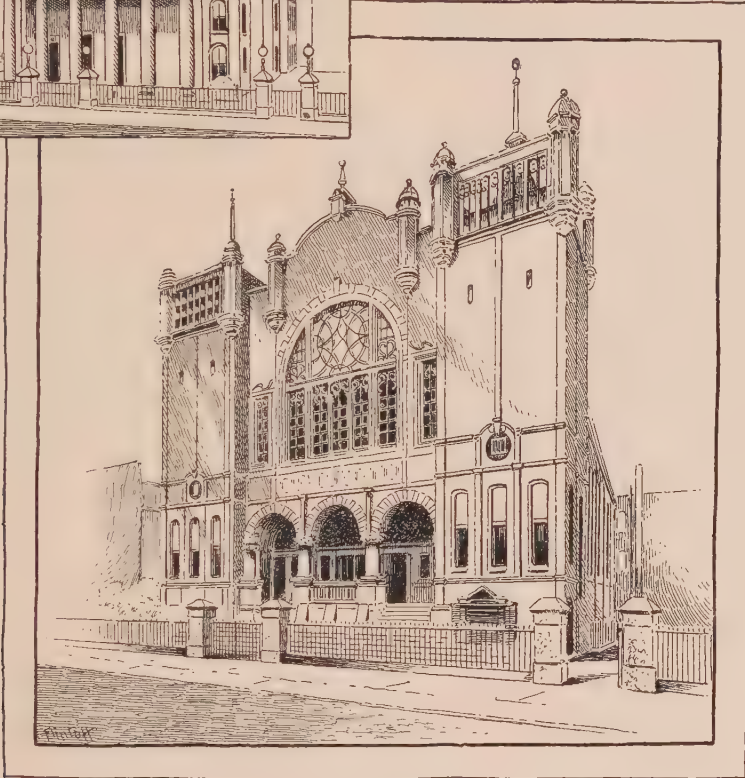
Whitefield assisted in raising him in bed. Watts apolo-

gized for the trouble he was giving. Whitefield answered, "Surely I am not too good to wait on a waiting servant of Christ." Whitefield took his leave, and half an hour later Dr. Watts was dead. Thus "met and parted the great hymnist and preacher, until they met again in the palace of angels and of God."

Unlike Charles Wesley, Whitefield did not regard separation from the Establishment with much alarm. Nor was he anxious to be regarded as the founder of a new denomination. "You judge right," he wrote to Hervey, "when you say I do not want to make a sect or set myself at the head of a party. No; let the name of Whitefield die so that the cause of Christ may live."

Much space might be occupied with the names and titles of the rich acquaintances of Lady Huntingdon who heard Whitefield preach not only in her drawing-room, but in his tabernacles. But it must not be inferred that he was devoid of the gift which Wesley coveted, and indeed possessed in pre-eminent degree—that of reaching the hearts of the poor and outcast classes. Shirley tells us that certain ladies having called to pay a visit to the countess, she asked them if they had heard Mr. Whitefield preach; and on being answered in the negative, she expressed a wish that they should attend his preaching on the day following. The ladies did so; and the countess, when they next met, inquired how they liked him. "O my lady," they answered, "of all the preachers we ever heard he is the most strange and unaccountable. Among other preposterous things he declared that Jesus Christ is so willing to receive sinners that he does not object to receive even the devil's castaways! My lady, did you ever hear of such a thing since you were born?" Her ladyship acknowledged that the language was a little singular, but as

Mr. Whitefield was in the house, she would send for him and he should answer for himself. Whitefield came; the previ-



THE TWO LATER TABERNACLES.

The upper edifice was erected in 1831 and demolished in 1889. The new Tabernacle was dedicated in November, 1899. Toplady is buried beneath it.

ous conversation was repeated, and he said: “My lady, I must plead guilty to the charge; whether I did right or oth-

erwise your ladyship shall judge from the following circumstances: Half an hour ago a poor, miserable-looking, aged female requested to speak with me. I desired her to be shown into your parlor. She said: 'O sir, I was accidentally passing the door of the chapel where you were preaching last night and I went in, and one of the first things I heard you say was that Jesus Christ was so willing to receive sinners that he did not object to receiving the devil's castaways. Now, sir, I have been on the town many years, and am so worn out in his service that I think I may with truth be called one of the devil's castaways. Do you think, sir, that Jesus Christ would receive me?' I," said Whitefield, "assured her that there was no doubt of it, if she was but willing to go to him." The poor outcast was converted, and died testifying to the infinite grace of Christ.

His regular ministerial work in his new London Tabernacle was prodigious. Every Sunday morning he administered the Lord's Supper to several hundred communicants at half-past six. After this he read prayers; for he still loved the old liturgy; too venerable to be the monopoly of any sect. He preached three times, and after evening service gave special addresses to widows, married people, young men, and maidens, all sitting in the area of the Tabernacle. On four week-day mornings in succession he preached at six, and on five evenings lectured. This involved thirteen sermons a week! And all this while he carried on a correspondence with people in many parts of the world. When away from the Tabernacle he traversed England from the Isle of Wight to Berwick-on-Tweed, and from the Land's End to the North Foreland.

He visited Scotland fourteen times, outlived the early prejudice of the kirks, and again and again made large

collections for the Edinburgh orphans. On one occasion, in a letter to the Countess of Huntingdon, he wrote: "For about twenty-eight days, I suppose, I did not preach in Scotland to less than ten thousand every day. This has weakened my body; but the Redeemer knows how to renew my strength. I am as well as a pilgrim can expect to be. About £70 were collected for the Edinburgh orphans; and I heard of near a dozen young men who were awakened



FROM THE ENGRAVING BY G. NEWTON.

HERRIOT'S HOSPITAL, EDINBURGH, IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

about ten years ago, and have since entered the ministry, and are likely to prove very useful. Praise the Lord, O my soul!"

One of his popular helpers at the Tabernacle was Captain Torial Joss. He had passed through many strange adventures, and had been converted by overhearing a religious conversation and reading the works of Bunyan. Wesley found him at Robin Hood Bay, where he joined the society. He became captain of a ship belonging to that port, named The Hartley Trader, but which was nicknamed The Pulpit on account of the captain preaching on board and in dock.

Whitefield heard of him, and one day, when his ship was in the Thames, announced that the captain would preach in the Tabernacle. Whitefield was delighted with his sermon, and finally persuaded the mariner "to quit compass, chart, and ocean" for the pulpit. So in 1776 Captain Joss became an assistant preacher, attracting crowds by his soul-converting sermons. Berridge used to call him "the Archdeacon of Tottenham." He died in 1797, and was buried in the chapel.

A year after he had secured the help of the sea captain Whitefield enlisted the services of Captain Scott, of the Seventh Regiment of Dragoons, who had been converted under Romaine. We have already recorded Fletcher's opinion of the "redcoat" when he heard him at Madeley. Whitefield invited him to London, and said to his people, "I have invited the captain to bring his artillery to the Tabernacle rampart and see what execution he can do here." Soon after this Captain Scott sold his commission, and for upward of twenty years was one of the supplies for the pulpit. About the same time Whitefield commenced a correspondence with Rowland Hill, who was destined to become for a short time one of his successors. Hill was now at Cambridge, full of holy fire, persecuted by his fellow-students, and censured by his college authorities for his fervent evangelism of the surrounding villages. "Go on, my dear man, go on," wrote Whitefield with much delight; "the storm is too great to hold long. . . . Now is the time to prove the strength of Jesus yours."

During the last four years of his life in England Whitefield's friendship with the Wesleys became very warm. John Wesley breakfasted with him, and sadly writes of him as "an old, old man, fairly worn out in his Master's service, though he has hardly seen fifty years;" and a month later: "Mr.

Whitefield called upon me. He breathes nothing but peace and love. Bigotry cannot stand before him, but hides its head wherever he comes." And in a letter to his wife Charles Wesley wrote of two happy hours he and his brother spent with their old friend. "The threefold cord we trust will never more be broken." Whitefield was conscious his

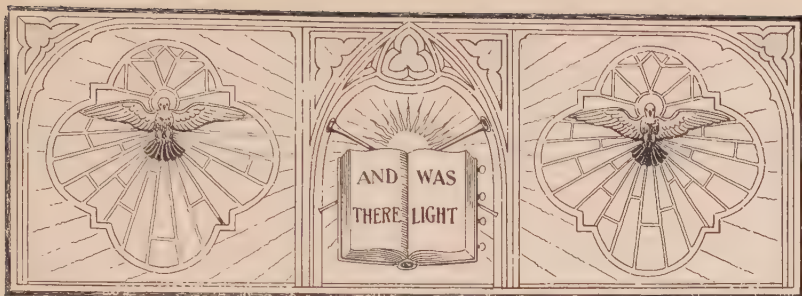


TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD IN 1776.

FROM AN OLD PRINT.

work was drawing to a close, but "the shout of a king," he said, "is yet heard in the Methodist camp. Had I wings, I would gladly fly from pole to pole, but they are clipped by the feeble labors of thirty years. . . . Pray that the last glimmering of an expiring taper may be blessed to the guiding of many wandering souls to the Lamb of God." On August 25, 1769, he held one of his last sacramental services in the Moorfields Tabernacle. Two thousand communicants

were present; and on the following Sunday he preached his last sermon in Tottenham Court Road Chapel from Genesis xxviii, 12-15. He closed with the words: "God grant that none who weep now at my parting may weep at our meeting at the day of judgment! Come, sinner, come, see what it is to have eternal life! Haste! haste! haste away to the great, the glorious Shepherd! I care not what shepherds you are under, so that you are kept near the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. The Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you! The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace!"



CHAPTER XCII

George Whitefield's Candle "Burns Out in Its Socket"

GREETING WESLEY'S MISSIONARIES.—LAST GLIMPSES OF THE ORPHAN-AGE.—THE COMING WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.—WHITEFIELD'S LAST SERMON AND EXHORTATION.—THE SORROW OF THE PEOPLE, PREACHERS, AND POETS.

WE have already recorded the significant fact that in the fall of 1769 two ships were facing the same Atlantic storms, one conveying Whitefield for his seventh and last mission to America, and the other bearing Boardman and Pilmoor to assist in laying the foundations of transatlantic Methodism. The apostolic labors of Whitefield and the earnest evangelism of the obscure Irish and Palatine emigrants had paved the way for Wesley's missionaries. It is pleasant to find Whitefield and Pilmoor meeting, and invoking, as the latter tells us, the blessing of "the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls" on one another's labors.

Whitefield found his orphanage in unprecedented prosperity. It was the child of his heart, and his joy was rapturous: "O Bethesda, my Bethel, my Peniel! My happiness is inconceivable. Let Chapel, Tabernacle, heaven, and earth resound with hallelujah!" He preached before the govern-

or, council, and commons of the Georgia Legislature, in the Bethesda he loved so well, and presented the duly audited balance sheet of the institution, from which it appears that of £15,404 expended on the edifice, £3,290 were the result of his private benefactions. The auditors stated on oath that Mr. Whitefield "had not charged the house a dollar for his traveling or any other expenses when raising funds for the said house."

The last six months of Whitefield's life were spent amid intense political excitement. On every side he heard the cry, "Taxation without representation is tyranny!" The "Sons of Liberty" would wear no taxed broadcloth, the "Daughters of Liberty" would drink no taxed tea. Whitefield evidently sympathized to some extent with the grievances of the colonists, for in his last letter, written only seven days before he died, he says: "New England is most to be pitied; Boston people most of all. How falsely misrepresented! What a mercy that our Christian charter cannot be dissolved." A terrific storm was gathering, but before it burst Whitefield had reached the land of everlasting peace.

After preaching every day with undiminished power, on a circuit of four hundred and fifty miles, Whitefield sped northward for his last services. On Saturday morning, September 29, 1770, he set out from Portsmouth, N. H., to Boston, intending to preach on Sunday at Newburyport. On the way he stopped at Exeter, fifteen miles from Portsmouth, and was entreated to preach.

"Sir," said Mr. Clarkson, observing with alarm his unusual restlessness, "sir, you are more fit to go to bed than to preach."

"True, sir," replied Whitefield; then, turning aside, he

clasped his hands together and said: "Lord Jesus, I am weary in thy work, but not of thy work. If I have not yet finished my course, let me go on and speak for thee



FROM AN OLD PRINT.

THE "OLD SOUTH CHURCH," NEWBURYPORT.

Where Whitefield preached, and where he was buried.

once more in the fields, seal thy truth, and come home and die."

And so he spoke once more for his Master in the open air. A vast multitude assembled. His text was "Examine

yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." One who was present thus describes the preacher and his sermon. "The subject was, 'Faith and Works.' He rose up sluggishly and wearily, as if worn down and exhausted by his stupendous labors. His face seemed bloated, his voice was hoarse, his enunciation heavy. Sentence after sentence was thrown off in rough, disjointed portions, without much regard to point or beauty. At length his mind kindled, and his lionlike voice roared to the extremities of his audience. He was speaking of the inefficiency of works to merit salvation, and suddenly cried out in a voice of thunder: 'Works? works? a man to get to heaven by works? I would as soon think of climbing to the moon on a rope of sand!'"

Another gentleman who was present wrote: "Mr. Whitefield rose and stood erect, and his appearance alone was a powerful sermon. He remained several minutes unable to speak; and then said, 'I will wait for the gracious assistance of God; for he will, I am sure, assist me once more to speak in his name.' He then delivered perhaps one of his best sermons. 'I go,' he cried; 'I go to rest prepared; my sun has arisen, and, by aid from heaven, has given light to many. It is now about to set for—no, it is about to rise in the zenith of immortal glory. I have outlived many on earth, but they cannot outlive me in heaven. O thought divine! I soon shall be in a world where time, age, pain, and sorrow are unknown. My body fails, my spirit expands. How willingly would I live forever to preach Christ! But I die to be with him.' Whitefield's sermon was two hours in length."

The day drew to a close. "While Whitefield partook of an early supper the people assembled at the front of the par-

sonage—it was the residence of the Rev. Jonathan Parsons, of Newburyport—and even crowded into its hall, impatient to hear a few words from the man they so greatly loved. ‘I am tired,’ said Whitefield, ‘and must go to bed.’ He took a candle and was hastening to his chamber. The sight of the people moved him; and pausing on the staircase, he began to speak to them. He had preached his last sermon; this was to be his last exhortation. There he stood, the crowd in the hall gazing up at him with tearful eyes, as Elisha at the ascending prophet. His voice flowed on until the candle which he held in his hand burned away and went out in its socket. The next morning he was not, for God had taken him!”

It was at six o'clock on Sabbath morning, September 30, 1770, that George Whitefield died, at the age of fifty-six. He had remarked to President Finney, while at Princeton, N. J., “I shall die silent. It has pleased God to enable me to bear so many testimonies for him during my life that he will require none from me when I die.” And so it came to pass, for in silence the great preacher—perhaps the greatest of pulpit orators—fell asleep.

Vast crowds followed his body to its resting place in the vault under the Presbyterian meetinghouse. At the funeral service the Rev. Daniel Rogers offered prayer in which he confessed that he owed his conversion to Whitefield's ministry, and then exclaiming, “O my father, my father!” stopped and wept as if his heart was breaking. The people were bathed in tears. “What a friend,” cried the preacher, Jedidiah Jewett, “what a friend he has been to us, and our interests, religious and civil; to New England and to all the British colonies on the continent.” A marble cenotaph was placed in the church

in 1828, with an inscription written by Dr. Ebenezer Porter, as follows :

THIS CENOTAPH
IS ERECTED WITH AFFECTIONATE VENERATION
TO THE MEMORY OF THE
REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD
BORN AT GLOUCESTER, ENG. DECR. 16, 1714;
EDUCATED AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY; ORDAINED 1736
IN A MINISTRY OF 34 YEARS
HE CROSSED THE ATLANTIC 13 TIMES
AND PREACHED MORE THAN 18,000 SERMONS
AS A SOLDIER OF THE CROSS, HUMBLE, DEVOUT, ARDENT
HE PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD, PREFERRING THE
HONOR OF CHRIST TO HIS OWN INTEREST, REPOSE,
REPUTATION OR LIFE; AS A CHRISTIAN ORATOR, HIS DEEP
PIETY, DISINTERESTED ZEAL, AND VIVID IMAGINATION
GAVE UNEXAMPLED ENERGY TO HIS LOOK, ACTION, AND
UTTERANCE; BOLD, FERVENT, PUNGENT, AND POPULAR IN
HIS ELOQUENCE, NO OTHER UNINSPIRED MAN EVER
PREACHED TO SO LARGE ASSEMBLIES, OR ENFORCED
THE SIMPLE TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL BY MOTIVES SO
PERSUASIVE AND AWFUL AND WITH AN INFLUENCE
SO POWERFUL ON THE HEARTS OF HIS HEARERS.

HE DIED OF ASTHMA SEPT. 30, 1770.
SUDDENLY CHANGING HIS LIFE OF UNPARALLELED
LABORS FOR HIS ETERNAL REST.

The house in which Whitefield died is still standing, in School Street (Nos. 9 and 11), Newburyport. In the same street William Lloyd Garrison, the Abolitionist, was born. Thousands of pilgrims have visited the Presbyterian meeting-house to look at the old Bible from which Whitefield preached, the chair in which he died, and the open coffin in the vault. "I confess," wrote one Englishman, in 1867, who touched the skull in which once throbbed the busy brain of the preacher, "I envy America the possession of the earthly remains of dear George Whitefield; but perhaps it is

appropriate that while England claims the dust of Wesley the great republic should be the guardian of the dust of his holy brother."

The news of Whitefield's death reached England in No-



THE WHITEFIELD CENOTAPH.

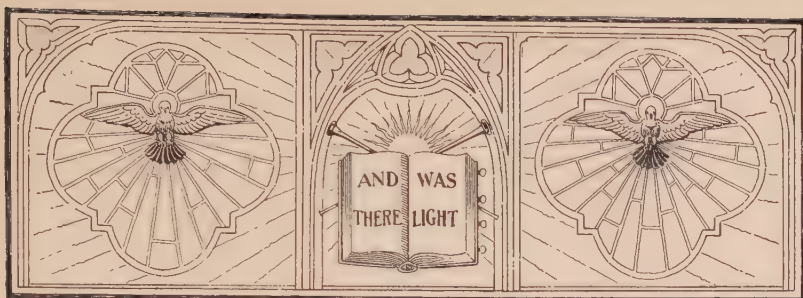
In the South Presbyterian Church, Newburyport.

vember. In compliance with Whitefield's expressed wish John Wesley preached his funeral sermon in Tottenham Court Road Chapel. Charles Wesley wrote an elegy, not perhaps in his best style, but full of tender feeling, describing him as "a living witness of the truths he taught;"

“for friendship formed by nature and by grace.” William Cowper, whose friend John Newton was one of Whitefield’s most ardent admirers, enshrined the pulpit orator in his famous lines—well worth quoting once again :

He loved the world that hated him ; the tear
That dropped upon his Bible was sincere.
Assailed by scandal and the tongue of strife,
His only answer was a blameless life,
And he that forged and he that threw the dart
Had each a brother’s interest in his heart.
Paul’s love of Christ, and steadiness unbribed,
Were copied close in him, and well transcribed ;
He followed Paul ; his zeal a kindred flame,
His apostolic charity the same ;
Like him, crossed cheerfully tempestuous seas,
Forsaking country, kindred, friends and ease ;
Like him he labored, and, like him, content
To bear it, suffered shame where’er he went.

Blush, Calumny ; and write upon his tomb,
If honest eulogy can spare thee room,
Thy deep repentance of thy thousand lies,
Which, aimed at him, have pierced the offended skies ;
And say, Blot out my sin, confessed, deplored,
Against thine image in thy saint, O Lord !



CHAPTER XCIII

Whitefield: the Man and the Preacher

PERSONAL TRAITS.—TRANSPARENT CHARACTER.—FRANK CONFESSION OF FAULTS.—THE PREACHER ON HIS THRONE.—THE SECRET OF HIS POWER.—WESLEY AND WHITEFIELD.

WHITEFIELD'S portraits and printed sermons fail to show the living man, the genial friend, the mighty orator. Those who saw his face illuminated by spiritual feeling tell us of its wonderful power of expression, not marred by the slight ocular defect which prompted his vulgar sobriquet. His friend Middleton describes him as graceful and well proportioned; his stature above the medium; his complexion very fair; his eyes of dark-blue color; his countenance manly, and his voice exceeding strong, yet both were softened with an uncommon degree of sweetness. He was always clean and neat, and often said, pleasantly, that "a minister of the Gospel ought to be without a spot." He was possessed of remarkable natural grace of manner, free from all stiffness and formality. His frankness and courtesy made him a charming companion in every social circle. He was utterly devoid of all appearance of affectation. He seemed to be quite unconscious of the talents he possessed.

Whitefield's protégé, Cornelius Winter, already referred to—who had been a workhouse boy and became a minister of some renown—was an inmate of his house for eighteen months, and gives an account of his generous friend's personal habits, interesting in detail, but not altogether in good taste. Referring to the unjust charges of luxury, in the ribald plays of the day, he heard Whitefield cheerfully say, "How surprised would the world be if they were to peep upon 'Dr. Squintum' and see a cow-heel only on his table!" He was very orderly. Everything must be in its place; every meal must be punctually and daintily served; everyone in his house must go to bed at ten and rise early. Breaches of order rendered him irritable, for he was naturally impulsive. But he was soon appeased and penitent. Before one whom he had hurt by sudden and harsh rebuke he burst into tears, saying, "I shall live to be a poor, peevish old man, and everybody will be tired of me." He was tenacious in his friendship. He felt desertion keenly. Utterly unaffected in manner himself, he was severe on artificial habits in young men who sought his help as preachers. He often appeared weary of popularity. He dreaded the thought of outliving his usefulness. He desired to die suddenly. Usually for an hour or two before preaching he claimed retirement, with Matthew Henry's Commentary and Cruden's Concordance as his favorite books. On Sunday mornings his frame of mind was more than ordinary devotional, for, though there was a vast vein of pleasantry in his usual conversation, before preaching his lips were full of private ejaculation and praise. His rest was often interrupted, and he often said at the close of an address, "I got this sermon when most of you were fast asleep."

One of Whitefield's texts was, "Wherefore glorify ye the

Lord in the fires" (Isa. xxiv, 15); in illustrating which he was wont to say: "When I was, some ten years ago, at Shields, I went into a glasshouse and saw a workman take a piece of glass and put it into three furnaces in succession. I asked, 'Why do you put it into so many fires?' He answered, 'O sir, the first was not hot enough, nor the second, and therefore we put it into the third; that will make it transparent.' 'O,' thought I, 'does this man put this glass into one furnace after another that it may be made perfect? Then, O my God! put me into one furnace after another that my soul may be transparent.'"

His character is perfectly transparent. More than two thousand of his letters have been published in almost merciless indiscrimination by Gillies and Tyerman. But Whitefield himself never concealed anything. His faults and virtues alike lie open to the day. "And the fullest and most honest exponent of the faults of George Whitefield is George Whitefield himself," says an Anglican historian. In no spirit of affected self-abasement, but in a genuine spirit of humility, and with a real consciousness of his own infirmities and the dangers to which his popularity exposed him, he lays bare to us his own character, with all its temptations and weaknesses.

"Alas! alas!" he writes, "in how many things have I judged and acted wrong. I have been too rash and hasty in giving characters of both persons and places. Being fond of Scripture language, I have often used a style too apostolical, at the same time I have been too bitter in my zeal. Wild-fire has been mixed with it, and I find that I frequently wrote and spoke in my own spirit when I thought I was speaking and writing by the Spirit of God. I have likewise too much made inward impressions my rule of acting, and

too soon and too explicitly published what had better have been kept in longer or told after my death. By these things I have given some wrong touches to God's ark, and hurt the blessed cause I would defend, and also stirred up needless opposition." Canon Overton well remarks that it is impossible to help loving a man who so frankly and artlessly owns his faults. Criticism is disarmed when it is thus met half way. "No, sir," he writes to Bishop Lavington; "no, sir, my mistakes have been too many and my blunders too frequent to make me set up for infallibility. I came soon into the world; I have carried high sail, whilst running through a whole torrent of popularity and contempt; and by this means I have sometimes been in danger of oversetting; but many and frequent as my mistakes have been, or may be, as soon as I am made sensible of them they shall be publicly acknowledged and retracted."

His faults lie on the surface. It would be easy from his letters to give instances of his bad taste, especially when he is referring to his aristocratic friends in Lady Huntingdon's circle. In this respect he differed utterly from John Wesley, who never lavished praises on what Whitefield calls "tiptop gentility." But it must be remembered that it was common in Whitefield's day for the foremost literary men (except Samuel Johnson) to use the language of the sycophant in addressing the nobility. Whitefield's sermons show that he was the very reverse of a sycophant. Let the following specimen suffice: "Woe unto you who are at ease in Zion, and, instead of staying to be tempted by the devil, by idleness, self-indulgence, and making continual provision for the flesh, even tempt the devil to tempt you! Woe unto you who, not content with sinning yourselves, turn factors for hell, and make a trade of tempting others to sin! Woe unto you who either

deny divine revelation or never use it but to serve a bad turn! Woe unto you who sell your consciences and pawn your souls for a little worldly wealth or honor! Woe unto you who climb up to high places in Church or State by corruption, bribery, extortion, cringing, flattery, or bowing down to and soothing the vices of those by whom you expect to rise! Woe unto you! for, whether you will own the relation or not, you are of your father, the devil; for the works of your father you do. I tremble for you. How can you escape the damnation of hell?"

We have seen the effects of his preaching. What was the secret of his power? His printed sermons do not supply an answer, although Bishop Ryle of Liverpool thinks "they are greatly underrated." They suffice to show that he did not possess a majestic intellect; that he was no master of logic or of a literary style. It has been said that Whitefield would have consulted his own fame best if he had never permitted them to see the light. "Possibly so," replies one reviewer, "but in that case his fame would have been exaggerated beyond the bounds of truth; a majestic intellect would have been invented for him, which he nowhere by any chance betrays; and the glory of his moral earnestness would have been proportionately diminished." It is in this last that we are to find the main secret of his power.

But we must not overlook his natural gifts. In Whitefield, the born orator, the natural and the supernatural met. His presence was manly, his features mobile, and he possessed a voice of marvelous flexibility and power. Franklin said that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of that voice, was so perfectly timed that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse—a pleasure of much the same kind as

that received from an excellent piece of music. Garrick pronounced his action almost perfect. "I would give a twelvemonth's income," he once whispered, "to be able to lift my handkerchief like that." He had qualities which would have made him a great actor. Utterly free from unreality, he was yet quick to appreciate dramatic effect. He was sensible to picturesque or appalling surroundings. In the midst of the "Vanity Fair" of Moorfields or Marylebone; in Hyde Park at midnight; amid panic-stricken crowds, shaken by earthquake and expecting the end of the world; on Hampton Common, surrounded by twelve thousand people collected to see a man hung in chains; on the coffin of a horse-stealer, near Boston, with the sheriff by his side; or on the grassy knoll at Kingswood, where the "mount" was his pulpit "and the heavens his sounding-board," he used with thrilling effect every visible object that would give power to his appeals.

Of his remarkable descriptive power some instances are preserved. He is describing the wanderings of a poor blind beggar—not a very attractive subject for the Humes and Walpoles and Chesterfields—a poor blind beggar led by a dog, the image of the merely natural reason without the light of revelation; a poor blind beggar, wandering in the dark, wild night, through cold and rain and tempest. The poor wanderer wends his way till at last he reaches the edge of a fearful cliff and precipice. He does not know the dread and danger beneath; he does not know that death is there—that abyss! His dog is not faithless, but he has lost his way; he does not know. The night is very dark, and the dog has taken the fatal step; he is over the cliff, but still the poor blind man holds on; another step—another step—

"Good heavens! He's gone! Save him, Whitefield"!

From whence did that come? those words that thrilled and rang through the chapel, and broke the peroration of the description. Whence? From a rustic—and all those scholars and peers smile contemptuously? Not so; from Chesterfield's pew! from Chesterfield himself! that cold and heartless follower of fashion, whose motto for all society was *Nil admirari*; whose prime article of creed it was to school and discipline all the passions and the feelings so that they should never be observed.

Hume (who thought it worth while to go twenty miles to hear Whitefield preach) quotes another of his descriptions which is very effective. "Once," he says, "after a solemn pause, he thus addressed his audience: 'The attendant angel is just about to leave the threshold of this sanctuary and ascend to heaven. And shall he ascend and not bear with him the news of one sinner, among all this multitude, reclaimed from the error of his ways?' Then he stamped with his foot, lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, and cried aloud, 'Stop, Gabriel! stop, ere you enter the sacred portals, and yet carry with you the news of one sinner converted to God!' This was accompanied with such animated yet natural action that it surpassed anything I ever saw or heard in any other preacher." One more specimen of his descriptive power may be quoted. At the close of a sermon on the last judgment, after a pause, he said, with tears in his eyes: "I am going now to put on my condemning cap. Sinner, I must do it. I must pronounce sentence upon you." Then, like a peal of thunder, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!"

But the secret of Whitefield's success lies beyond these natural gifts of the orator. Sir James Stephen, the keen, judicial critic of the *Edinburgh Review*, well says: "Neither

energy, nor eloquence, nor histrionic talents, nor any artifices of style, nor the most genuine sincerity or devotedness, nor all these united, would have enabled him to mold the religious character of millions in his own and future generations. The secret lies deeper." It is found in the nature of the doctrines he taught—familiar to-day, but new to many then—and in the supernatural power which rested upon a man with a truly great soul. A writer in the *London Quarterly Review* truly observes: "A man of superficial character might cause a momentary spasm to pass over the face of society, to be succeeded by deadlier torpor; but only a man of boundless will and vast emotional capacity could have stirred so profoundly and at the same time so incessantly the depths of its very being. Stage scenery and footlights will—so we have been informed—do much to set off good acting, but even an actor must be in earnest to win his poor applause. A Faust might make a Frankenstein, but we never yet heard that a Frankenstein could make a Faust. Tested by his power over his audiences, Whitefield must have had—or rather must have been—a great soul." John Richard Green, the English historian, well says that his "preaching was such as England had never heard before; . . . often commonplace, but hushing criticism by its intense reality, its earnestness of belief, its deep, tremulous sympathy with the sin and sorrow of mankind."

"Should we not mention," said Wesley in his funeral sermon, "his deep gratitude to all whom God had used as instruments of good to him? . . . Should we not mention that he had a heart susceptible of the most generous and the most tender friendship? . . . How few have we known of so kind a temper, of such large and flowing affections! Was it not principally by this that the hearts of others were so strangely

drawn and knit to him? Can anything but love beget love? This shone in his very countenance, and continually breathed in his words, whether in public or private. Was it not this which, quick and penetrating as lightning, flew from heart to heart? which gave that life to his sermons, his conversations, his letters? Ye are witnesses! . . . What was the foundation of this integrity, or of his sincerity, courage, patience, and every other valuable and amiable quality? It is easy to give the answer. It was not the excellence of his natural temper, not the strength of his understanding; it was not the force of education; no, nor the advice of his friends; it was no other than faith in a bleeding Lord; 'faith of the operation of God.'"

What is probably the true version of a story concerning Wesley's warm friendship for Whitefield was sent to the editor of the *Contemporary Review*, in 1891, by Mr. Bevan Braithwaite, the venerable representative of the Society of Friends at the centenary celebration of Wesley's death. Mr. Braithwaite heard it from Edward Pease (the friend and early patron of George Stephenson), who died in 1857 at the advanced age of ninety-two. He was fond of relating how in early manhood he had stolen into a chapel to hear Wesley preach, and had a distinct recollection of his personal appearance and earnest solemnity of manner. The following was his story:

"One day, after Whitefield's decease, John Wesley was timidly approached by one of the godly band of Christian sisters who had been brought under his influence, and who loved both Whitefield and himself:

" 'Dear Mr. Wesley, may I ask you a question?'

" 'Yes, of course, madam, by all means.'

" 'But, dear Mr. Wesley, I am very much afraid what the answer will be.'

“ ‘ Well, madam, let me hear your question, and then you will know my reply.’ ”

“ At last, after not a little hesitation, the inquirer tremblingly asked, ‘ Dear Mr. Wesley, do you expect to see dear Mr. Whitefield in heaven?’ ”

“ A lengthened pause followed, after which John Wesley replied with great seriousness, ‘ No, madam.’ ”

“ His inquirer at once exclaimed, ‘ Ah, I was afraid you would say so.’ ”

“ To which John Wesley added, with intense earnestness, ‘ Do not misunderstand me, madam; George Whitefield was so bright a star in the firmament of God’s glory, and will stand so near the throne, that one like me, who am less than the least, will never catch a glimpse of him.’ ”



CHAPTER XCIV

A Great Ethical Hurricane

WESLEY'S "LOFTY IDEAL OF PRACTICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS."—THE DANGER OF UNGUARDED CALVINISM.—WESLEY'S FAMOUS MANIFESTO OF 1770.—A COUNTERBLAST TO ANTINOMIANISM.—LADY HUNTINGDON ON "POPERY UNMASKED."—SHIRLEY'S CIRCULAR TO ALL PROTESTANTS.—"A PATCHED-UP PEACE."

DR. DALE, the eminent Congregationalist, speaking as a thorough evangelical, once said: "One great defect of what we call the Evangelical Revival consists in its failure to afford to those whom it has restored to God a lofty ideal of practical righteousness and a healthy, vigorous moral training. . The result is lamentable. Many evangelical Christians have the poorest, meanest, narrowest conceptions of moral duty, and are almost destitute of moral strength. If this defect is to be remedied, we evangelicals must think more about Christian ethics." A recent Fernley lecturer, Dr. Davidson, remarks that these are strong words, but they are not the language of an enemy or of a man accustomed to exaggerate, and may well be taken to heart.

But the great leader of the Evangelical Revival himself thought much "about Christian ethics." There are no more trenchant, practical treatises on ethics in the English language than are to be found in many of his sermons. And in the

accounts of the Calvinistic controversy we have now to review it has not, perhaps, been sufficiently observed that it was the ethical enthusiasm of Wesley and Fletcher that led the former to publish the Manifesto and the latter the Checks which kindled and fanned the fire of controversy. Neither of them loved controversy for its own sake, but each of them was possessed with a burning zeal for righteousness not unlike that of the old Hebrew prophets.

We have seen that Wesley's intense conviction of the importance of practical morality led him to take drastic measures to rid his society of antinomian teachers, and their perversions of evangelical truth. But, as Fletcher says, antinomianism had "spread like wildfire" among some of the societies. Most of Wesley's preachers, like John Nelson, never ceased to urge the people to maintain good works. But a few were using the cant phrases and catchwords of a perverted Calvinism. It would be unjust to call the leading Calvinistic clergy antinomians. Wesley did not do so. But the teaching of some of them provided little safeguard against immorality at a time when antinomianism was doing fatal damage to the cause of religion.

Take the case of Romaine, a clergyman of grave, lofty, unblemished personal character. Wilberforce wrote in his Journal in 1795: "Dined with old Newton, where I met Henry Thornton and Macaulay. Newton very calm and pleasing. Owned that Romaine had made many antinomians." An Anglican historian says of Romaine, "He was no antinomian himself, but one can well believe that his teaching might easily be perverted to antinomian purposes." "Thou art not bound to keep its (the law's) precepts in order to have life for thy obedience," preached Romaine. "Thy Surety undertook to act and suffer for thee. He was to an-

swer the law, in its commands and demands, to every jot and tittle."

This type of teaching was perverted by lesser men who were devoid of Romaine's refined moral sense and personal piety. They held, practically, that, since salvation was all of grace through faith, they were not required to maintain good works; their standing in Christ was secured by election, and, clothed in his imputed righteousness, their own righteousness was a matter of indifference. It was not merely a logical deduction on Wesley's part that looseness of life might result from such loose doctrine. He had painful evidence that immorality was the actual result. He claimed the right to deal with the matter in his own Conference of preachers which met in London a month before the death of Whitefield. Hence arose the famous Minute of 1770, the outburst of a controversy which lasted for eight years, and the publication of Fletcher's famous Checks to Antinomianism.

The Minute which provoked the new controversy declared: "We said in 1744, 'We have leaned too much toward Calvinism.' Wherein?

"1. With regard to man's faithfulness. Our Lord himself taught us to use the expression. And we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert, on his authority, that if a man is not 'faithful in the unrighteous mammon,' God will not give him the true riches.

"2. With regard to working for life. This also our Lord has expressly commanded us. 'Labor' (*ἐργάζεσθε*), literally, 'work,' for the meat that endureth to everlasting life.' And, in fact, every believer, till he comes to glory, works for as well as from life.

"3. We have received it as a maxim that 'a man is to do nothing in order to justification.' Nothing can be more

false. Whoever desires to find favor with God should 'cease from evil, and learn to do well.' Whoever repents should do 'works meet for repentance.'"

Then followed a review of the whole affair, concluding that "we are every hour and every moment pleasing or displeasing to God, according to our works; according to the whole of our inward tempers and our outward behavior."

This restatement of doctrine was intended for the preachers, and as a counterblast to antinomianism. Lady Huntingdon and her Calvinistic friends, however, regarded it as an attack on their doctrine of "imputed righteousness" and "justification by faith." Wesley seldom used the former term, on account of its frequent abuse, but the tenor of his preaching for thirty years and his recent sermon on the death of Whitefield ought to have convinced them of his loyalty to the great doctrine of the Reformation, justification by faith.

In his sermon on Whitefield's death Wesley had urged his hearers to "keep close to the 'grand doctrines' which Whitefield delivered, and to drink in his spirit." What were those doctrines? "May they not," says Wesley, "be summed up, as it were, in two words: the new birth, and justification by faith?" Immediately after the publication of the sermon Wesley was attacked by the Gospel Magazine, and charged "with asserting a gross falsehood" in saying that "the grand fundamental doctrines which Mr. Whitefield everywhere preached" were those just specified. The editor maintained that Whitefield's "grand fundamental doctrines which he everywhere preached were the everlasting covenant between the Father and the Son, and absolute predestination flowing therefrom."

Lady Huntingdon broke off her friendship with the Wesleys, and declared that she "could burn against" the Minute.

Joseph Benson, the classical tutor in her college at Trevecca, ventured to defend it. She at once dismissed him from his post. Fletcher, who was president of the college, wrote to



FROM A CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE.

AN EARLY PORTRAIT OF JOSEPH BENSON.

The dismissed tutor of Trevecca College.

her stating that he approved Wesley's doctrine, though he did not think the Minutes carefully worded at every point; and he explained them to her according to Wesley's sentiments. He then resigned the presidency of the college. Wesley wrote a letter of expostulation to the countess, in which he referred her to three sermons, one on "Salvation by

Faith," published in 1738, and requested that the Minutes of Conference might be interpreted by these sermons. But her cousin and adviser, the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, said publicly "he termed peace in such a case a shameful indolence, and silence no less than treachery." As the next Wesleyan Conference approached he and the countess issued a circular calling on all who agreed with them to go in a body to the Conference and insist upon a formal recantation of the said Minutes. Her ladyship wrote to Charles Wesley, inclosing a copy of the circular, and branding the Minutes as "popery unmasked." She declared that "those ought to be deemed papists who did not disavow" them. Charles Wesley wrote across the letter: "Lady Huntingdon's last. Unanswered by John Wesley's brother."

Shirley's appeal was circulated throughout Britain. It did not produce the effect on "all Protestants" that its authors expected. The day before the Bristol Conference Wesley received letters from Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Shirley apologizing for the unbecoming tone of the circular, which assumed that they had a "civil right" to go to the Conference and demand a recantation of the Minutes. Wesley courteously appointed a day for the momentous interview. When the hour arrived the dignified Shirley appeared, accompanied by two more of the countess's ministers, three laymen, and two youthful students from Trevecca College. It was not an imposing representation of "all Protestants." But Mr. Shirley was quietly heard. He agreed that the apology for the obnoxious circular should be published. After further discussion as to the meaning of the Minutes, Wesley and all the preachers, except Thomas Olivers, who would have nothing to do with "a patched-up peace," signed a declaration of their loyalty to the doctrine of justification by

faith, and their abhorrence of justification by works as a most perilous and abominable doctrine. A few days later Mr.



DRAWN BY G. WILLARD BONTE.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH.

"THE HOLE IN THE WALL."

The entrance from the Horsefair, Bristol, to the chapel where the Conference of 1771 was held.

Shirley sent an acknowledgment that he had mistaken the meaning of the Minutes.

The controversy, however, did not end here. Fletcher's first Check to Antinomianism was already in the press. Wesley's doctrines had been publicly attacked. Their public vindication by Fletcher created a controversial hurricane.



CHAPTER XCV

John Fletcher's Literary Masterpiece

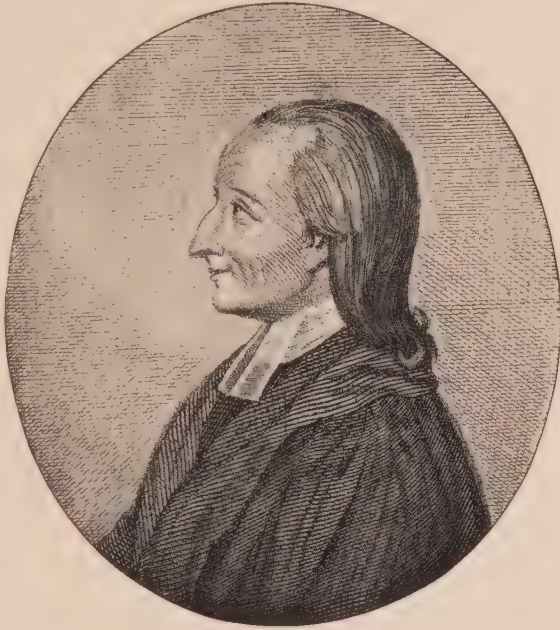
THE NEED OF A NEW REFORMATION.—“CHECKS TO ANTINOMIANISM.”
—“THE SALT OF IRONY.”—STRENGTH AND BEAUTY OF STYLE.—
PATHETIC REFERENCES TO WESLEY AND WHITEFIELD.—PERMANENT
VALUE OF THE “CHECKS.”—A METHODIST CLASSIC.

“IT appears, if I am not mistaken,” writes Fletcher in the first of his famous Checks, “that we stand now as much in need of a reformation from antinomianism as our ancestors did of a reformation from popery. People, it seems, may now be ‘in Christ’ without being new creatures, and new creatures without casting old things away. They may be God’s children without God’s image.” This was Fletcher’s main reason for the publication of his five pamphlets.

His mastery of English was remarkable, when we remember that he was a foreigner. “His style was the natural, living product of his genius. It was French in its luxuriant expansion, and French in its vigorous compression; French in its flashing, and often withering, wit, and French in its directness and decisiveness; it is also Swiss—sturdy, daring, picturesque, and unconventional, sometimes to utter recklessness.” In this respect his style was a contrast to Wesley’s, yet he could be at times almost as terse and axiomatic as his

English friend. "Inconsistency is the badge of error," is one of his epigrams, and his reply to an opponent who wishes to explain away his inevitable admissions is almost Wesleyan—"If you grant me two and two, you grant me four; you cannot help it."

In his noble vindication of the freedom of the human will he attains to eloquence of a high order. "To the end of the world, this plain, peremptory assertion of our Lord, 'I would, and ye would not,' will alone throw down the sophisms and silence the objections of the subtle



FROM A CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE.

THE REV. JOHN FLETCHER.

philosophers against free will. When I consider what it implies, far from supposing that the will is like a lifeless pair of scales, necessarily turned by the least weight, I see in it such a strong, self-determining power that it can resist the effect of the most amazing weights; keep itself inflexible under all the warnings, threatenings, miracles, promises, entreaties, and tears of the Son of God, and remain obstinately unmoved under the strivings of the Holy Spirit. Yes, put in one scale the most stupendous

weights; for instance, the hopes of heavenly joys and the dread of hellish torments; and only the gaudy feather of honor or the breaking bubble of wordly joy in the other—if the will cast itself into the light scale, the feather or bubble will instantly preponderate. Nor is the power of the rectified will less wonderful; for, though you should put all the kingdoms of the world and their glory in the one scale, and nothing but the reproach of Christ in the other, yet, if the will freely leap into the infamous scale, a crown of thorns easily outweighs a thousand golden crowns, and devouring flame makes ten thousand thrones kick the beam.”

A rich vein of satirical humor runs through his controversial writings. His satiric genius was French, “but it was that of Pascal, not that of Voltaire. There was no laughing devil in his sneer. Fletcher treated the antinomians as Pascal dealt with the Jesuits. The Checks incessantly remind one of the Provincial Letters; there is the same merciless exposure; the same tearing up of sophisms by the root; the same subtlety of distinction and smartness of repartee; the same unblenching audacity of irony; the same relentless logic and keen-edged refutation; the same explosion, as with a bombshell, of unsound and misleading methods of thought.”

His exposure of the antinomian doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness is worthy of Pascal. He represents the antinomians as pleading: “We hated private prayer; but impute to us thy love of that duty, and the prayer thou didst offer upon a mountain all night. We have been rather hard to forgive; but that defect will be abundantly made up if thou impute to us thy forgiving of the dying thief, and if that will not do, add, we beseech thee, the merit of that good saying of thine, ‘Forgive, and you shall be for-

given.' We have cheated the king of his customs; but no matter, only impute to us thy exact paying of the tribute money, together with thy good advice, 'Render unto Cæsar

Madeley 20th Feby 1774.

My dear friend

I thank you for your kind intention of seeing Madeley once in your life: I welcome you before hand to my house and pulpit: and want to know when ~~me~~^{well} I must get you a bed^{well} aired: next month your brother leaves London, and our roads will be tolerable, nay they begin to be so now. So come round this way: correct my scales and strength, cheer my soul, and rouse my staid flock.

Believe me yours in I. Christ

J. Fletcher

FACSIMILE OF FLETCHER'S HANDWRITING.

From a letter to Charles Wesley, 1774.

the things which are Cæsar's.' It is true we have brought up our children in vanity, and thou never hadst any to bring up. May not thy mercy find out an expedient, and impute to us instead of it thy obedience to thy parents? And if we

have received the sacrament unworthily, and thou canst not cover that sin with thy worthy receiving, indulge us with the imputation of thy worthy institution of it, and that will do yet better."

But perhaps his most audacious irony is his retort on the antinomians when they protest that works of faith as well as of pride are "filthy rags, dung, and dross." He collects the passages in the New Testament which insist on the necessity and blessedness of good works, and inserts "filthy rags," "dung," or "dross" in the place of "good works." "She hath wrought a good work (filthy rag) upon me against my burial." "We are created in Christ Jesus to good works (filthy rags) which God has prepared for us to walk in." "Be rich in good works (in dross)." "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for their works (their filthy rags) follow them," etc. Canon Overton remarks, "Surely these passages are worthy of Dean Swift himself." But Fletcher protested that his free use of the "salt of irony" was dictated not by "spleen, but reason," and maintained that "ridiculous error is to be turned out of the temple of truth with mild irony, which is a proper scourge."

Elsewhere he says: "None should dip his pen in the wine of irony till he has dipped it in the oil of love, and even then he should not use it without constant prayer. If he goes too deep, he does mischief; if not deep enough, he loses his time; the virulent humor is not discharged, but irritated by the skin-deep operation. And 'who is sufficient for these things?' Gracious God of wisdom and love! if thou callest us to this difficult and thankless office, let all our sufficiency be of thee, and should the operation succeed, thine and thine only shall be the glory.

"And yet, brethren, 'I show you a more excellent way'

than that of mild irony. If love is the fulfilling of the law, love after all must be the destruction of antinomianism."

Fletcher is careful to guard his doctrine of the duty of good works from abuse, and he does this in a passage of striking beauty: "Remember thou hast nothing to boast of, but much reason to be humbled. If thy works are compared to a rose, the color, odor, and sweetness are Christ's; the aptness to fade and the thorns are thine. If to a burning taper, the snuff and smoke come from thee; the bright and cheering light from thy Bridegroom. The excellence and merit of the performance flow from him; the flaws and imperfections from thee. Nevertheless, the whole work is as truly thine as grapes are truly the fruit of the branch that bore them."

Very pathetic is Fletcher's protest against the unkindness with which Wesley has been treated: "A gray-headed minister of Christ, an old general in the armies of Immanuel, a father who has children capable of instructing even masters in Israel, one whom God made the first and principal instrument of the late revival of true religion in Israel," should have met with more consideration. In another paragraph, as beautiful in style as in spirit, he incidentally pays a generous tribute to the Calvinist Whitefield: "Of the two greatest and most useful ministers I ever knew, one is no more. The other, after amazing labors, flies still with unwearied diligence through the three kingdoms, calling sinners to repentance and to the healing fountain of Jesus's blood. Though oppressed with the weight of near seventy years, and the care of near thirty thousand souls, he shames still, by his unabated zeal and immense labors, all the young ministers in England, perhaps in Christendom. He has generally blown the Gospel trumpet and rode sixteen or

twenty miles before most of the professors who despise his labors have left their downy pillow. As he begins the day, the week, the year, so he concludes them, still intent upon extensive services for the glory of the Redeemer and the good of souls. And shall we lightly lift up our pens, our tongues, our hands, against him? No; let them rather forget their cunning. If we will quarrel, can we find nobody to fall out with but the minister upon whom God puts the greatest honor? Our Elijah has lately been translated to heaven. Gray-headed Elisha is yet awhile continued upon earth. And shall we make a hurry and noise to bring in railing accusations against him with more success?"

Fletcher's masterpiece remains to this day a really valuable contribution to the literature of an age-long dispute. Every Methodist preacher reads the Checks as an indispensable part of his studies, and they are found at all points of the globe whither Methodist preachers have borne the cross. "They have been more influential in the denomination than Wesley's own controversial writings on the subject; for he was content to pursue his itinerant work, replying but briefly to the Hills, and leave the contest to Fletcher." They have influenced, if not directly through Fletcher's writings, yet indirectly through Methodism, the subsequent tone of theological thought in much of the Protestant world. Richard Watson considered that Fletcher's argument, by its bold and fearless exhibition of the logical consequences of the doctrines of the decrees, effected much greater moderation in those who still admitted them, and gave birth to some softened modifications of Calvinism in the age that followed—an effect that has remained to this day. And Fletcher's latest biographer, F. W. Macdonald, says: "His argument was clear in outline and convincing in detail. Popular

errors were exposed, paradoxes explained, and misunderstanding removed, with a knowledge of Scripture and a skill in reasoning that astonished everyone. The meek Vicar of Madeley was a master of controversy. He had learning and logic for scholars, with imagination, wit, and pathos to charm the common people. The style was genial and easy, abounding in lively comparisons and illustrations, while a gentle vein of humor, stopping short of bitterness on the one hand and burlesque on the other, mingled not unbecomingly with passages of the most exalted devotion. Love to God is manifest on every page, and only second to it is love for those with whom he must needs contend, a veritable longing after them in the bowels of Jesus Christ." "If ever," wrote Southey, "true Christian charity was manifested in polemical writing, it was by Fletcher, of Madeley." Dr. Abel Stevens observes: "Fletcher was declining in health during the contest, and he wrote, not only as on the verge of the grave, but as at the gate of heaven. . . . It can be said of his controversial pamphlets that they may be read by devout men, even as aids to devotion; they are severe only in the keenness of their arguments; they glow with a continuous but unobtrusive strain of Christian exhortation; the argument alternates with pleas for peace. . . . It may be probably affirmed that no man previously undetermined in his opinions on the Calvinistic controversy can read Fletcher's Checks through without closing them an Arminian; and it is no detraction to them to add that this effect is owing to their moral as well as to their logical power." "I nothing wonder," says Wesley, "at a serious clergyman, who, being resolved to live and die in his own opinion, when pressed to read them replied, 'No, I will never read them; for if I did, I should be of his mind.'"



CHAPTER XCVI

The Fever-heat of Controversy

JOHN WESLEY'S PROVOKING SILENCE.—CHAMPIONS OF CALVINISM.—
RICHARD AND ROWLAND HILL.—AUGUSTUS MONTAGUE TOPLADY.—
CONTROVERSIAL MUD.—THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE.—WESLEY ON
CALVINISM.

JOHN WESLEY wrote but little on the controversy, and his opponents were greatly vexed because he went on steadily with his evangelistic work and handed them over to Fletcher, Thomas Olivers, and Walter Sellon. Thomas Olivers is best known by his fine hymn, "The God of Abraham praise," and it is to be regretted that the hymnist plunged into polemics, for he was less temperate than Fletcher, and, unlike him, retaliated personal abuse. This "sturdy Welshman," as Southey calls him, had been a roaming shoemaker, and lived a wild life before his conversion under Whitefield. A man of active brain and strong will, he became a diligent student, and later we find him acting as Wesley's editor in London. He was a chivalrous and powerful defender of Wesley, a stout champion of practical morality, and a vigorous thinker. Walter Sellon, whom we have met before, had well used his opportunities as a clergyman of the Establishment, and had given himself

to divinity. He defended "the Church of England from the charge of absolute predestination."

The chief champions of Calvinism were Sir Richard Hill and his brother Rowland, Augustus M. Toplady, and John



PAINTED BY W. DERBY.

FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY FREEMAN.

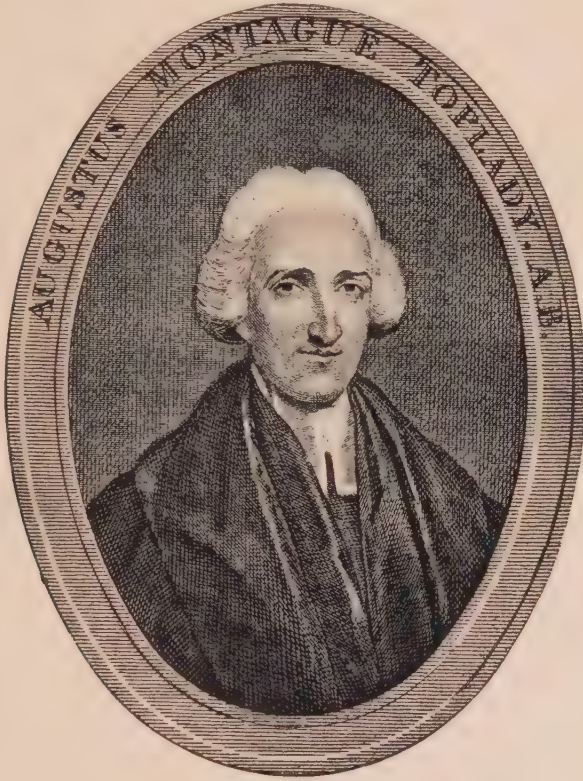
REV. ROWLAND HILL.

Berridge. Richard and Rowland Hill belonged to a branch of the family in which Fletcher had been a tutor. When Richard was in spiritual distress Fletcher had walked several miles to converse and pray with him, and under Romaine he had found the "life of faith." Rowland Hill, as we have seen, had been the leader of a band of Methodist

students at Cambridge, where he was a student at St. John's College. He shared similar persecution to that which resulted in the expulsion of the six Oxford students whom his brother Sir Richard defended in his *Pietas Oxoniensis* and *Goliath Slain*. Six bishops rejected Rowland Hill, because of his Methodism, before the Bishop of Wells ordained him, in 1774. Both brothers were originally preachers, but Richard, the layman, afterward gave his strength to politics. Rowland Hill occupied Whitefield's pulpit, and Captain Joss received at one time over a hundred converts who had been awakened under Hill's preaching. We shall meet him again as the pulpit prince of Surrey Chapel.

The Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady, whose portrait we reproduce from *The Gospel Magazine*, was the son of an English officer who died at the siege of Carthage. The son appears to have inherited his father's military spirit. He was converted when a youth of sixteen by hearing an illiterate lay preacher in an Irish barn, and decided to become a preacher. He relates an anecdote which throws light on the clerical habits of his day. He says: "I was buying some books in the spring of 1762, a month or two before I was ordained, from a very respectable London bookseller. After the business was over he took me to the farthest end of his large shop and said in a low voice: 'Sir, you will soon be ordained, and I suppose you have not laid in a very great stock of sermons. I can supply you with as many sets as you please, all original, very excellent ones, and they will come for a trifle.' My answer was: 'I certainly shall never be a customer to you in that way; for I am of the opinion that the man who cannot or will not make his own sermons is quite unfit to wear the gown. How could you think of my buying ready-made sermons?"

I would much sooner buy ready-made clothes.' His answer shocked me. 'Nay, young gentleman, do not be surprised at me offering you ready-made sermons, for I assure you I have sold ready-made sermons to many a bishop in my time.'



FROM A COPPERPLATE ENGRAVING.

REV. AUGUSTUS MONTAGUE TOPLADY.

From The Gospel Magazine, 1777.

My reply was, 'My good sir, if you have any concern for the Church of England, never tell that news to anybody else henceforward forever.'"

Toplady was a man of genuine piety, burning zeal, and

fair scholarship. His six volumes of theology are regarded by Calvinists as invincible, and the evangelical Bishop Ryle of Liverpool has claimed for his "controversial writings the merit of soundness and ability," though he does "with sorrow admit that" he "cannot praise his spirit and language when speaking of his opponents. The epithets he applies to his adversaries are perfectly amazing." After making all allowance for provocation, and for the different standard of taste that prevailed a hundred years ago, "the fact remains," says the venerable and beloved Anglican bishop; "as a controversialist Toplady was extremely bitter and intemperate, and caused his good to be evil spoken of." Toplady's best monument is his famous hymn, perhaps the best known hymn in the world, "Rock of Ages." But we must return hereafter to Toplady as a hymn-writer; we have now the less pleasing task of regarding him and the brothers Hill as controversialists.

That these Calvinistic friends were exasperated by Wesley's comparative silence is evident. Toplady writes: "Let Mr. Wesley fight his own battles, but let him not fight by proxy; let his cobblers keep to their stalls, his tinkers mend their brazen vessels, his barbers confine themselves to their blocks and basins, his blacksmiths blow more suitable coals than those of controversy; each man in his own order." Wesley is elegantly described as "slinking behind one of his drudges." Some of the terms used respecting this venerable servant of God, who had grown gray in unparalleled labors for Christ, are almost too bad to be transcribed, but they serve to show the spirit of the age. Here are a few: "An old fox, tarred and feathered;" "a designing wolf;" "the most perfect and holy and sly that e'er turned a coat, or could pilfer and lie;" "a dealer in stolen wares, as unprincipled

as a rook and as silly as a jackdaw;" "a gray-headed enemy of all righteousness;" "a venal profligate;" "an apostate miscreant;" "the most rancorous hater of the Gospel system that ever appeared in this land; a low and puny tadpole in divinity." He is charged with "low, serpentine cunning," and with "driving a larger traffic in blunders and blasphemies than any other blunder-merchant this island has produced."

The Calvinistic organ was The Gospel Magazine, from which we take Toplady's portrait. Some of the passages in this periodical are so coarsely virulent and even filthy as to be unquotable to-day. A few extracts suffice to reveal its spirit. Wesley's Journal is described as a "whole-length portrait of the weakness, vanity, and insolence of the most unprincipled being that waddles on the surface of this planet." "O ye deluded followers of this horrid man, God open your eyes. . . lest ye run into his artful snares as the fascinated squirrel runs into the jaws of the rattlesnake." And one "poem" addressed to Wesley by "Philaethes" ends with the gentle advice:

O think of this, thou gray-haired sinner,
Ere Satan pick thy bones for dinner.

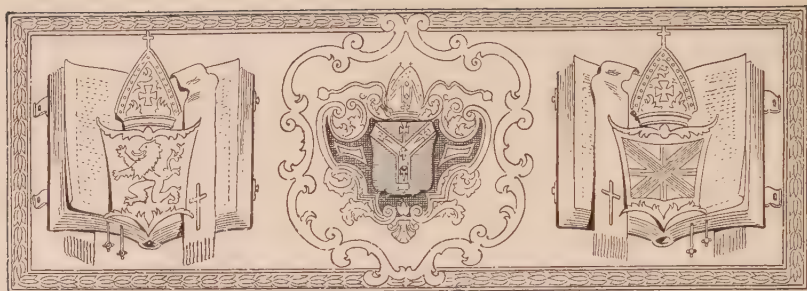
And this in a "Gospel" magazine! It reflects only too faithfully the spirit of the writer, but it is only just to state that some of the more sober Calvinists grew ashamed of the publication, and it was given up.

Sir Richard Hill, of "ancient family," was intensely annoyed because Thomas Olivers ventured to reply to him. "I shall not," said Hill, "take the least notice of him, or read a line of his composition, any more than if I was traveling on the road I would stop to lash, or even order my foot-

man to lash, every impertinent little quadruped in a village that should come out and bark at me, but would willingly let the contemptible animal have the satisfaction of thinking he had driven me out of sight." Even Fletcher was provoked to remark upon this passage: "How lordly is this speech! How surprising in the mouth of a good man who says to the Carpenter, 'My Lord and my God!'" It is not surprising that Olivers himself resented such assault, for in genuine manhood and native intellect the rugged Welshman showed himself superior to the aristocrat. Toplady assailed the "cobbler," as he called him, with merciless severity, and his sarcastic references to the man who had once "nursed a lapstone" reveal the tendency to vulgar "snobbishness," which was becoming only too manifest in the party under the patronage of "her ladyship." There is evidence that the social division emphasized and aggravated the doctrinal one. Wesley would never pay court to mere rank, or join in the adulation of "lords and ladies." He reproved with equal fidelity the faults of a cobbler or a countess, and a faithful letter he wrote to Lady Huntingdon had been resented by her and her somewhat obsequious friends.

When Wesley received Hill's scurrilous pamphlet a little cool irony fell from his pen as he wrote in his Journal, 1772: "July 11. I was presented with Mr. Hill's Review, a curiosity in its kind. But it has nothing to do with either good nature or good manners; for he is writing to an Arminian." Toplady's translation of Zanchius on Predestination drew from Wesley his well-known summary of Calvinism: "The sum of all is this: one in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can." Toplady recognized Wesley's mental

force, and wrote: "I am not insensible to your parts, but, alas! what is distinguished ability if not wedded to integrity!" Rowland Hill called Wesley "the lying apostle of the Foundry." But, as Macdonald has well said, "we have no heart to pursue the details of this history. It is complicated and unremunerative in the last degree. It deepened into bitterness and scurrility, till its later literature becomes unreadable for very shame; it separated brethren; it turned allies into adversaries; it offered to a skeptical and ungodly age the spectacle of good men 'smiting one another unfriendly,' and consumed time and strength that were wanted, and more than wanted, for the Christianizing of the country."



CHAPTER XCVII

The Honest Hearts beneath the Armor

JOHN WESLEY'S REPUTATION.—THE ECCENTRIC ROWLAND HILL.—THE RECONCILIATION OF BERRIDGE AND FLETCHER.—COURTEOUS WALTER SHIRLEY AND STATELY MADAN.—STOUT-HEARTED, HONEST TOPLADY.—THE POLEMIC'S DYING AVOWAL.

CHARLES WESLEY came to live in London about the time the Calvinistic controversy commenced, and, although he took no public part in the fray, he rendered great service to Fletcher by revising all his manuscripts and seeing them through the press. He differed from his brother on the Established Church question, but his affection for him was unabated, and he was far more jealous of his brother's reputation than of his own. His daughter Sarah has preserved an anecdote which illustrates this as well as John Wesley's calm fidelity to his work amid his troubles. Her uncle had promised to take her to Canterbury and Dover, in 1775, and she was looking forward to this with peculiar pleasure. The day before the journey her father heard that Mrs. John Wesley had ransacked her husband's bureau and taken out some letters, on which, by interpolating words and misinterpreting spiritual expressions, she contrived to place a vile construction. These she read to some Calvinists. They were to be sent to the Morn-

ing Post. Mr. Russell, a Calvinist and an intimate friend of Charles Wesley, told him of the plot, suspecting that the letters were partial forgeries. Charles hastened to the Foundry to induce his brother to postpone his journey and remain in town to protect his reputation. "Never shall I forget," says Miss Wesley, "the manner in which my father accosted my mother on his return home. 'My brother,' said he, 'is indeed an extraordinary man. I placed before him the importance of the character of a minister; the evil consequences which might result from his indifference to it; the cause of religion; stumbling-blocks cast in the way of the weak; and urged him, by every relative and public motive, to answer for himself, and stop the publication. His reply was: "Brother, when I devoted to God my ease, my time, my life, did I except my reputation? No. Tell Sally I will take her to Canterbury to-morrow."'"

Miss Wesley adds, "The letters in question were satisfactorily proved to be mutilated, and no scandal resulted from his trust in God." Richard Watson records that in his day some of these letters, mutilated, interpolated, or forged by this unhappy woman, had got into different hands, and were still preserved. There were other Calvinists besides Charles Wesley's friend who protested against the attempt on the part of Rowland Hill, Toplady, and others to defame Wesley's personal character.

Rowland Hill, however, lived to lament the bitter spirit of the controversy, and he said of his own writings, "A softer style and spirit would have better become me." He also suppressed one of his most violent publications. The smoke of the controversy must not conceal from us his noble work as an impressive, witty, warm-hearted preacher. . Lady

Huntingdon called him "a second Whitefield," although she afterward took offense because she heard that he ridiculed her "feminine apostleship," and she would not thenceforth invite him to her pulpits. He opened Surrey Chapel in 1783, and for fifty years he ministered there, theoretically a Churchman, but practically a Dissenter. He became one of the founders of the Bible Society, the Tract Society, and the London Missionary Society, and an effective promoter of Sunday schools. He was the most popular of London preachers for half a century. His style was peculiarly his own. Dr. Milner, Dean of Carlisle, exclaimed, after hearing him: "Mr. Hill, I felt to-day—say what they will, it is this slapdash preaching that does all the good!" Southey heard him in 1823, when he was seventy-nine years old, and after speaking of his animation and his powerful voice he adds, "The manner was that of a performer as great in his line as Kean or Kemble."

Hill resembled Berridge in his natural drollery. Many of the anecdotes of his eccentricities are without foundation, but the following, recorded by his nephew, Edwin Sydney, are probably authentic. In one of his collection sermons he exclaimed: "There is a perpetual frost in the pockets of some wealthy people; as soon as they put their hands into them they are frozen and unable to draw out their purses. Had I my way, I would hang all misers, but—the reverse of the common mode—I would hang them up by the heels; that their money might run out of their pockets, and make a famous scramble for you to pick up and put into the plate." On a wet day, when a number of persons took shelter in his chapel during a heavy shower while he was in the pulpit, he said, "Many people are greatly blamed for making their

religion a cloak; but I do not think those are much better who make it an umbrella." Being told that he did not preach to the elect, he took an early opportunity, in the pulpit, to say: "I don't know them, or I would preach to them. Have the goodness to mark them with a bit of chalk, and then I'll talk to them." "I don't like those mighty fine preachers," he said, "who so beautifully round off their sentences that they are so sure to roll off the sinner's conscience." "Never mind breaking grammar," he said to his excellent co-pastor, Theophilus Jones, "if the Lord enables you to break the poor sinner's heart."

But Rowland Hill was much more than a pulpit humorist. Even Sheridan declared, "I go to hear Rowland Hill because his ideas come red-hot from the heart."

Hill and Fletcher met at the home of the Thorntons and shook hands as brothers. The health of Fletcher was seriously undermined by the prolonged contest. "I went," said one Calvinistic visitor, "to see a man with one foot in the grave, but found a man with one foot in heaven."

John Berridge, who had allowed his sarcastic humor to run riot during the controversy, received Fletcher at his rectory after an absence of twenty years. Berridge ran toward him, took him in his arms and wept, exclaiming: "My dear brother, this is indeed a satisfaction I never expected. How could we write against each other when we both aim at the same thing, the glory of God and the good of souls? But my book lies quietly on the shelf; and there let it lie." "I retired," says Fletcher's traveling companion, "leaving the pious controversialists to themselves for about two hours. On my return I found them in the true spirit of Christian love, and mutually as unwilling to part as they had been happy in meeting each other. 'Brother,' said Berridge, 'we

must not part without your praying with us.' The servants being called in, Fletcher offered up a prayer filled with petitions for their being led by the Holy Spirit to greater degrees of sanctification and usefulness as ministers, and dwelt much upon that effusion of the Spirit which fills the pages of his tract called *The Reconciliation*. Berridge then began, and was equally warm in prayer for blessings upon 'his dear brother.' They were indeed so united in love that we were obliged, in a manner, to tear away Fletcher, that he might keep his appointment with Venn, whom he was to meet at dinner at St. Neot's. Here we found that most excellent minister waiting for us; and here we had another instance that good men of different sentiments need only be brought together, and unite at a throne of grace, to prove that they are of one heart. They met, they conversed, and parted with every demonstration of the most cordial and Christian affection. Venn was so totally absorbed by his subject, while speaking of the duties of ministers, that Fletcher was obliged to remind him, playfully, that he had a meal before him." "He was like an angel on earth," said Venn, afterward, to his congregation at Yelling.

Walter Shirley, who had been the most courteous of the Calvinistic clergy, also met Fletcher under the roof of their friend Mr. Ireland, of Bristol. Shirley was the rector of Loughrea, County Galway, Ireland, and had welcomed Wesley to his church. His bishop threatened him, but Archbishop Ryder of Tuam was wiser, and being somewhat of a humorist, enjoyed snubbing Shirley's enemies, who pestered him with paltry accusations.

"O your grace," exclaimed an excited curate of Loughrea, "I have such a circumstance to communicate to you: one that will astonish you!"

"Indeed!" replied the archbishop; "and what can it be?"

"Why, my lord," said the curate, with a solemn air, "he wears—white stockings!"

"Very anticlerical, and very dreadful indeed!" responded the prelate with raised eyebrows.

The curate was confident that this time he had made an impression. The archbishop, drawing his chair closer to the informer, solemnly asked, "Does Mr. Shirley wear them over his boots?"

"No, your grace," replied the mortified curate.

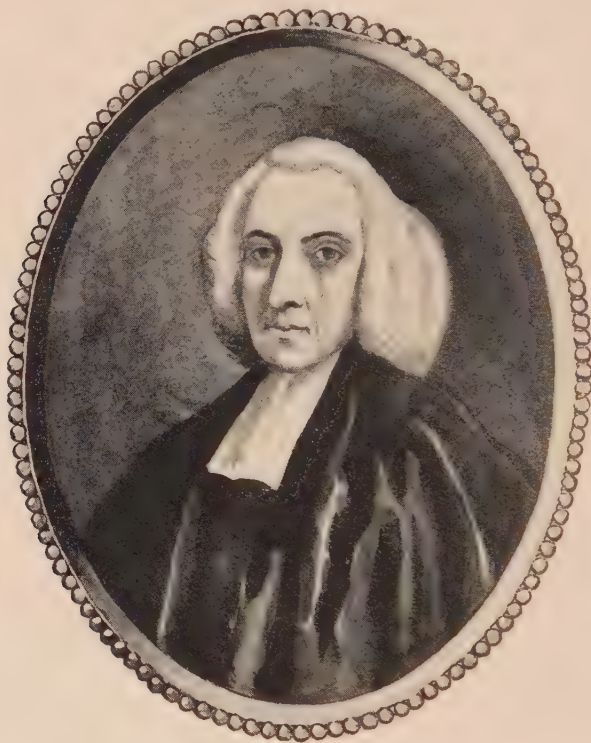
"Well, sir," added the prelate, "the first time you find him with his stockings over his boots pray inform me, and I shall deal accordingly with him."

Shirley ought to be remembered as the writer of the popular hymn, "Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing." He was a tireless and successful evangelist. Like Whitefield, he preached to the last. At Dublin he sat in his chair, unable to lie in bed, dying of dropsy, but "preaching to great numbers who crowded the drawing-rooms, the lobbies, and the staircase, as far as his voice could be heard."

Martin Madan, a cousin of the poet Cowper, was one of Lady Huntingdon's most dignified and graceful preachers and hymn-writers. He circulated a manuscript Reply to Wesley's Minutes, and revised the angry pamphlets of Rowland Hill. Madan had been educated for the bar. Strange enough his wonderful powers of mimicry had introduced him to Wesley, under whose preaching he was converted. His gay companions urged him to "take off Wesley." For this purpose he went to hear him. The preached word went home, and the mimic, to redeem his pledge, returned to his comrades. "Have you taken off the Methodist?" they asked. "No, gentlemen," was the reply, "but he has taken me off."

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He left their company to become a pulpit orator of commanding figure and spiritual power. But he went astray later, and wrote a "pernicious book" on polygamy. Joseph Benson sought Wesley's counsel about confuting it, and was



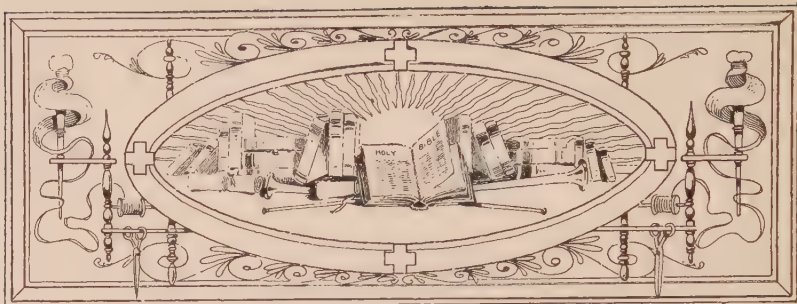
DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

REV. MARTIN MADAN.

advised by him to "steer between the extremes of too much roughness and too much smoothness. And see that you are plain enough for women and pretty gentlemen."

Within a year of the close of the controversy Toplady died. He had removed from the country parish of Broad Henbury to London, and two months before his death a

strange scene occurred in his chapel in Orange Street. He had heard a report that he had expressed a desire to recant his opinions in the presence of John Wesley. His combative but honest soul was greatly stirred. He resolved to appear before his congregation once more and publicly deny the rumor. His physician and family remonstrated in vain. He replied that he "would rather die in harness than die in the stall." He was carried to the pulpit, and there made his "dying avowal" that he was satisfied of the truth of all that he had ever written. He was carried from his pulpit and soon after borne to his grave. He was only thirty-eight when he died; and Bishop Ryle says: "If he had lived longer, written more hymns, and handled fewer controversies, his memory would have been held in greater honor. . . . Toplady's undeniable faults should never make us forget his equally undeniable excellencies." Wesleyan Methodists to-day agree with the evangelical bishop. One of them writes of the sturdy polemic, "He was honest in his errors, and had a stout English heart, which commands our wonder, if not our admiration, in spite of his faults."



CHAPTER XCVIII

The Woman Apostle of Ecclesiastical Freedom

SOME NOBLE METHODIST CHURCH WOMEN.—LADY HUNTINGDON'S SECESSION FROM THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.—LORD DARTMOUTH'S METHODISM.—LADY HUNTINGDON'S LAST THOUGHT OF WESLEY.—“MY WORK IS DONE.”

AMONG the “honorable women” who came under the influence of Methodism were Lady Glenorchy, Lady Maxwell, and Lady Henrietta Hope. Lady Glenorchy became a widow when still young. Her grief and a severe illness led her to serious thought, and she gave herself to a life of active Christian devotion. She built chapels at Edinburgh, Bath, and in other places. Wesley met her in 1770 and obtained for her the services of an Irish Methodist clergyman, the Rev. Richard de Courcy, whose soul had been fired by the eloquent message of Shirley. He made St. Andrew's, Dublin, ring with the new evangel until the bishop silenced him. From a tombstone he preached to a great multitude, and then, coming to London, met Whitefield. He was deeply impressed when Whitefield took his hand and, placing it on a deep scar in his head, said, “This, sir, I got in your country for preaching Christ.” His ministry set all Sussex ablaze, and Lady Glenorchy found in him a prophet

of fire, according to Wesley's prediction. But by 1771 her Calvinism became too strong to allow her to continue to receive Wesley's preachers into her chapels—and De Courcy agreed with her!

Her friend Lady Maxwell, whose life and letters are a

Methodist devotional classic, remained a Wesleyan Methodist, and the fact that after Lady Glenorchy's death she became sole executrix and manager of her chapels witnesses to the strength of their affection. She was a devoted fellow-helper of Wesley, and her house was often transformed into a sanctuary. Lady Henrietta Hope was another



FROM A COPPERPLATE BY HOPWOOD.

LADY GLENORCHY.

Methodist, and these ladies were as a "threefold cord." Lady Hope built a chapel in Bristol which bore her name.

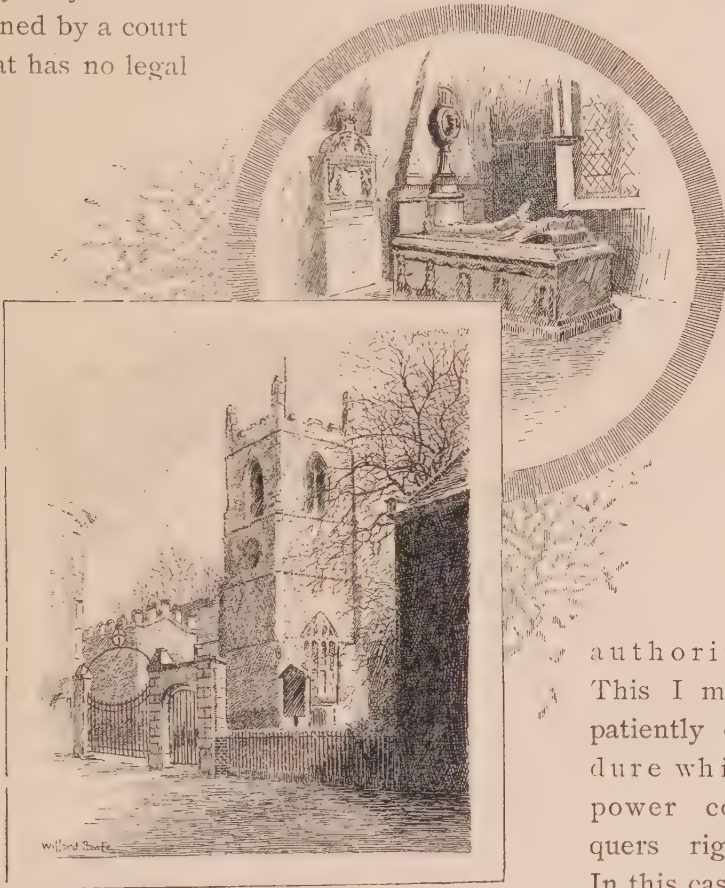
Lady Huntingdon maintained her leadership of her connection with undiminished vigor. Her chapels at Bath and Brighton were always full. About the middle of the last century Tunbridge Wells became a more popular resort than either of these places. "Card parties," says Dr. Stoughton, "balls, assemblies, and masquerades were the fashionable amusements, and above seventy coaches some-

times drew up at the door of the assembly rooms." There might be seen Johnson, in snuff-colored suit, bag-wig, and cocked hat; and Gilbert, Bishop of Salisbury, in his black gown and garter, blue ribbon and badge; and Whiston, lean and spare, in clerical dress and a pair of bands; Garrick, the Earl of Chatham, Speaker Onslow, and the Duchess of Kingston were among the visitors. After preachings promoted by the countess, in the little Presbyterian meetinghouse, she determined, on one of her visits to Tunbridge Wells in 1769, to erect a new place of worship—"a quaint structure of weatherboard and tiles," which, after being several times enlarged, was taken down in 1870. Whitefield preached at the opening one of his wonderful sermons. The dramatic power with which he painted Christ's agony in the garden, and appealed to the people to look and listen as if the scene had been before them, was long talked of among the visitors at the Wells.

Lady Huntingdon's societies, like Wesley's, drifted away rather than separated of set purpose from the Established Church. She was compelled to become a practical Dissenter in the interests of her noble evangelistic work. The crisis in her case, however, came earlier than in Wesley's. The step was not taken hastily, but after repeated provocations, legal decisions, and with a pure desire to secure the preaching of the Gospel.

The secession of Lady Huntingdon took place in 1781. Dr. Haweis and Mr. Glascott, both clergymen, had been silenced for preaching in the chapel at Spa Fields. The Rev. W. Taylor, coming forward to officiate, was put down by the intolerance of the vicar of the parish, and so she writes to Mr. Piercy, December 27, 1781: "This cruel and bitter enemy of mine is suffered to go great lengths of oppression; but

herein also I must see life arise from death. Should further citations come, I am unable to support the disputes, however unjustly determined by a court that has no legal



DRAWN BY G. WILLARD BONTE.

AFTER PHOTOGRAPHS.

THE LAST RESTING PLACE OF LADY HUNTINGDON.

Church of St. Helen's, Ashby. The Huntingdon Family Tombs.

authority.
This I must
patiently en-
dure while
power con-
quers right.
In this case I
am reduced
to turn the
finest congre-

gation, not only in England, but in any part of the world, into a Dissenting meeting, unless by the medium of secession. This is a subject in considering which nothing but

the very clearest convictions of conscience, impressed by the Holy Ghost, for the continued protection of the truth, and faithfulness to God's people, ought to make a point worth any minister's attending to." And again: "I am to be cast out of the Church now only for what I have been doing these forty years, speaking and living for Jesus Christ! . . . Blessed be the Lord, I have not one care relative to this event but to be found faithful to God and man through all. You will smile and rejoice with me in all I may suffer for our dear Immanuel's sake. I have asked none to go with me; and none that do not come willingly to the help of the Lord, and by faith in the Son of God lay all at his feet, would do me any good. . . . Dear Mr. Haweis, Wills, etc., are mightily owned and blessed of God in the conversion of sinners. The chapel is crowded from door to door, and multitudes go away disappointed at not being able to get in."

Lord Dartmouth, a member of the Privy Council, and for some time Colonial Secretary of State, was one of Lady Huntingdon's most trusted counselors, and it was by his advice that she became proprietor of the building in Spa Fields, which in many ways was subsequently honored of God. In that chapel the first sermon was preached on the founding of the London Missionary Society, when, according to the testimony of some who were present, the Spirit came down in pentecostal power. The whole congregation wept for joy at the prospect of the great work which they believed God was about to effect among the heathen. From that chapel, also, the first band of missionaries went forth to the South Sea Islands, to enter upon their long "night of toil" which has since been followed by a bright day of successful labor.

Lord Dartmouth's memory is preserved in America in the name of Dartmouth College, at Hanover, N. H., which he

patronized. "He was a standing witness," says a Church historian, "that Methodism was not a religion merely for the coarse and unrefined, for he was himself so polished a gentleman that Richardson is reputed to have said that he would have realized his own idea of Sir Charles Grandison if he had not been a Methodist. It was to him that Cowper alluded in the lines :

We boast some rich ones whom the Gospel sways,
And *one* who wears a coronet and prays.

'They call my Lord Dartmouth an enthusiast,' said George III, 'but surely he says nothing on religion but what any Christian may and ought to say.'

A proof of his religious earnestness and courage was given at Cheltenham. While staying there he obtained leave of the rector for his chaplain to preach in the parish church. After two or three sermons the rector and churchwardens were so offended at his doctrine that they refused to admit him again. Lord Dartmouth had sent for Whitefield, and caused it to be spread abroad that he would preach at a certain hour, when an immense crowd assembled, expecting he would preach in the church. At the time appointed, accompanied by Lord and Lady Dartmouth, Whitefield went down to the church, and, finding the door closed, mounted a tombstone, and addressed an attentive multitude from "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," etc. Venn, who was present, gives a most interesting account of this and other services which were held at that time at Cheltenham—several of them in his lordship's own mansion—and before they closed Charles Wesley arrived to share in the labor and to rejoice in the blessing. In the Lord's work

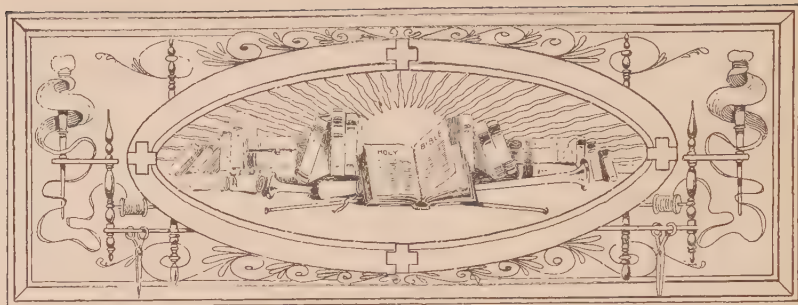
They all were of one heart and soul,
And only love inspired the whole.

It is gratifying to record that Lady Huntingdon lived to regret the spirit of the Calvinistic controversy. She survived Mr. Wesley about five months. After his death a small tract was published containing the particulars of his last illness, and the expressions to which he then gave utterance. Lady Huntingdon read it with great interest, and sending for Joseph Bradford, asked him if this account was true, and if Mr. Wesley really died acknowledging his sole dependence upon the meritorious sacrifice of Christ for acceptance and eternal life. He answered her ladyship that this was so, and that from his own knowledge he could declare, whatever reports to the contrary had been circulated, that the principles which Mr. Wesley recognized upon his deathbed had invariably been the subject of his ministry. She listened with eager attention to this statement, confessed that she had believed that he had grievously departed from the truth, and then, bursting into tears, expressed her deep regret at the separation which had in consequence taken place between them. She died at the age of eighty-four, in the Chapel House, Spa Fields, June 17, 1791, and was buried at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, clothed with the white silk dress in which she opened the chapel in Goodman's Fields. "I long to be at home. I shall go to my Father; can he forget to be gracious? Is there any end of his loving kindness? My work is done. I have nothing to do but go to my Father"—were among her last words.

Dr. Haweis, his wife, Lady Anne Erskine, and a lay gentleman were appointed trustees of the chapels, houses, and other effects of Lady Huntingdon's Connection; and they were to appoint successors.

The lease of the old house at Trevecca expired in 1787, and the students were removed to Cheshunt, Hertford-

shire, where the college still stands, accommodating forty students. The president is Dr. Reynolds, who has held the office more than thirty years, and has taken a high place as a theologian and man of letters. Four hundred and forty ministers have been trained at Cheshunt, which has enriched all the churches and supplied secretaries to the London Missionary Society, Religious Tract Society, and Bible Society. A successful mission, with eleven churches, has been carried on for more than fifty years at Sierra Leone, mainly by native ministers. The centenary of Lady Huntingdon's death was celebrated at Tunbridge Wells in 1891.



CHAPTER XCIX

“Your Daughters Shall Prophesy”

WOMEN PREACHERS IN ENGLAND.—MARY BOSANQUET (FLETCHER).—
CAST OUT FROM HER CHILDHOOD'S HOME.—SISTERS OF THE POOR.
—THE ORPHANAGE.—WESLEY'S VIEW OF WOMAN'S PUBLIC WORK.
—SARAH CROSBY AND MARY BOSANQUET AS PREACHERS.—FROM
THE QUARRY AND THE HORSEBLOCK.

“**W**HAT women these Christians have!” exclaimed Libanius, the pagan teacher of Basil and Chrysostom, in the fourth century, when he saw the mothers and sisters of his pupils. Methodism in the eighteenth century, as a revival of primitive Christianity, did much to restore woman to her true place, not only in the ministry of many homes in Britain and America, but in the more public service of the Church and humanity. It must not be forgotten, however, that the Quakers of the seventeenth century had recognized the right of women to “prophesy.” John Locke, the philosopher, once went to a Quaker meeting in London where he heard Rebecca Collins preach with such power that his objections to women preachers melted away, and he wrote to the Quakeress, “Woman, indeed, had the honor first to publish the resurrection of the Lord of love—why not again the resurrection of the Spirit of love?”

Earlier still the Baptist and Independent women occasionally preached. "Come along with me," a writer of 1636 makes the Baptist sectaries say; "I will show you a woman that preaches better Gospel than any of your black coats that have been at the university." We also read of Mrs. Attaway, "the mistress of all the she-preachers in Coleman Street;" and in 1653 Theodorus writes to Lord Conway: "Here is start up an audacious virago (or feminine tub preacher) who last Sunday held forth about two hours together within our late queen's mass chapel at Somerset House on the Strand."

We have seen that Susanna Wesley became a lay preacher in the rectory of Epworth and saw the fruit of her labor. Her meetings formed part of that providential training which made her not only the mother of the Wesleys, but also the "mother of Methodism." We cannot wonder that John Wesley, enriched by the influence of his gifted mother and sisters, should have recognized the freedom and power of woman in the work of extending and deepening the Evangelical Revival and its philanthropic ministry.

Mary Bosanquet, who became the wife of Fletcher, of Madeley, is the most eminent of the daughters of Methodism who received what Wesley called the "extraordinary call" to address mixed public congregations. She was born at Leytonstone, in Essex, three years before Susanna Wesley died. Her life of seventy-six years (1739-1815) covers a momentous period in Methodist and European history—from the year of the founding of the Methodist societies to the year of the battle of Waterloo; "record years" in the achievements of the two noble kinsmen, Wesley, the Methodist, and Wellesley, conqueror of Napoleon.

Mary Bosanquet's parents were well bred and wealthy.

They regarded Methodism as "enthusiasm." A simple, happy maidservant, having learned "some little of the power of inward religion among the people called Methodists," had tried to comfort Mary and her sister when they were



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

FROM A WOODCUT.

FOREST HOUSE, LEYTONSTONE.

Birthplace of Mary Bosanquet.

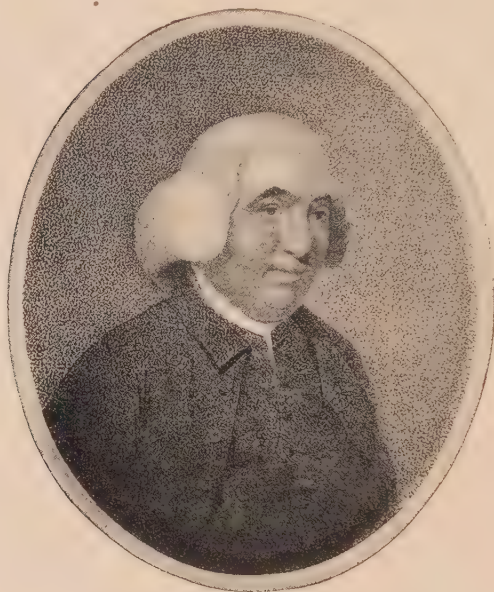
troubled with a sense of sin. The maid was dismissed; little religious books which she had lent the children were taken away; but her work was not in vain. Mrs. Fletcher in her womanhood truly said of the child heart that its reflections are deeper, its feelings far keener, than we are apt to imagine. As a child of seven or eight she tells us she was musing on the question, "What can it be to know my sins forgiven, and to have faith in Jesus?" when a sudden light streamed in upon her and she cried out with joy, "I do, yes, I do rely on Jesus, . . . and God hath forgiven me all my sins." At twelve she resolved, "If ever I am my own mistress, I will spend half the day working for the poor and the other half in prayer." Confirmation became to her "a very rousing ordinance" when she was thirteen, and the service was held at St. Paul's Cathedral, where Susanna

Wesley was confirmed. Her father was not opposed to religion of a "calm, rational" sort, and taught her to use the Church Catechism as a safe manual of devotion; but he was impatient with her questionings and irritated by her growing dislike for the fashionable world. She was required to dance at Bath, to attend theaters in London, and to dress in the costly and cumbrous style proper to a fine lady of that day.

When she was nineteen she made the acquaintance of some Methodist women whose sympathy and counsel strengthened her greatly. Her parents' dislike to her "fancies" increased, and the crisis came when her father tried to exact from her a promise that "you will never, on any occasion, either now or hereafter, attempt to make your brothers what you call a Christian." "I think, sir, I dare not consent to that," she replied. "Then," said the father, "you force me to put you out of the house." Her tranquil acceptance of the sentence touched him, and the matter of her banishment was left in abeyance for a month or two. But at last the hour came when the family carriage was put at her disposal "to carry her to her lodging," and she left her childhood's home forever.

She was not destitute, as she possessed a small independent fortune; but the change from the luxurious home to cheerless lodgings was very great. A very touching picture, says her latest biographer, is suggested by her simple narrative of her doings on that first strange evening. She had "no candle nor any convenience;" she was fain to borrow a table and candlestick from the people of the house—decent, good folk, but only known to her by reputation. Betaking herself to the window seat, for the lack of a chair, she sat musing over her position, and framing resolves as to her future conduct, until her maid arrived, kindled a fire for

her, and persuaded her to comfort herself in its warmth. "Some bread, with rank salt butter, and water to drink," made a meal for her which she ate with a kind of glad exaltation; the hard renunciation accomplished, all about her "seemed a little heaven." And now the story shows us the solitary girl resting on a bed spread for her on the floor



FROM AN OLD COPPERPLATE.

JOHN MURLIN.

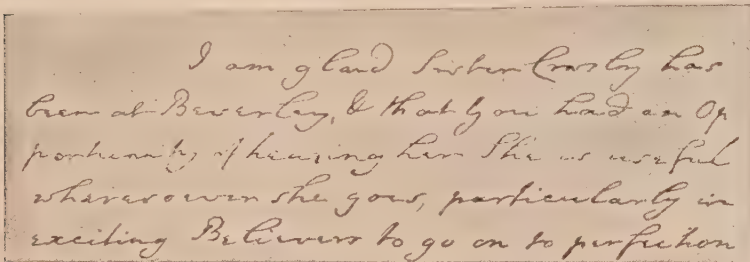
Whose preaching stirred up the mob at Leytonstone.

and gazing at the bright moonlight which streamed in at her curtainless windows, while high and tender musings filled her mind as the first night of her new life rolled away. "I am brought out from the world; I have nothing to do but be holy, both in body and spirit," was the thought which dominated all, and which indeed ruled her every action thenceforward.

She removed to Leytonstone when a house belonging to her became empty, and here she opened an orphanage, in which there were soon thirty children. Wesley sent tender-hearted John Murlin to conduct Methodist services there. The mob came, and when four of the ringleaders marched in, armed with clubs, Mary Bosanquet said to the frightened children and people, "O we do not mind mobs when

we are about the Master's business." Quietly explaining to the rioters the Rules of the Society, she gave a copy to each man, and they bowed and left.

Mrs. Sarah Crosby was one of Mrs. Fletcher's assistants in the orphanage, and a class leader. One Sunday night she went to her society class, expecting to find about thirty present. Instead of that there were nearly two hundred. She was not sure if it was right for her to exhort in so public a manner, but yet "saw it impracticable to meet all these people by way of speaking to each individual. I therefore



I am glad Sister Crosby has
been at Beverly, & that you had an op-
portunity of hearing her. She is useful
wherever she goes, particularly in
exciting Believers to go on to perfection

FRAGMENT OF A LETTER IN WHICH JOHN WESLEY MENTIONS
MRS. CROSBY.

gave out a hymn and prayed, and told them part of what the Lord had done for myself, persuading them to flee from all sin." A few days later she again exhorted "near two hundred people to forsake their sins, and showed the willingness of Christ to save." Then, being uncertain whether it was right for her to act so publicly, she wrote to Wesley for advice. His reply is dated from London, February 14, 1761:

"Hitherto, I think you have not gone too far. You could not well do less. I apprehend, all you can do more is, when you meet again, to tell them simply, 'You lay me under a great difficulty. The Methodists do not allow of women preachers, neither do I take upon me any such char-

acter; but I will just nakedly tell you what is in my heart.' This will in a great measure obviate the grand objection, and prepare for John Hampson's coming. I do not see that you have broken any law. Go on calmly and steadily. If you have time, you may read to them the Notes on any chapter before you speak a few words, or one of the most awakening sermons, as other women have done long ago."

John Hampson took up the work thus begun by Miss Bosanquet and her helpers. Eight years later Wesley writes to Mrs. Crosby on the same subject: "I advise you, as I did Grace Walton formerly: 1. Pray as much in private or public as you can. 2. Even in public you may properly intermix short exhortations with prayer; but keep as far from what is called preaching as you can. Therefore never take a text. Never speak in a continued discourse, without some break, above four or five minutes. Tell the people, 'We shall have another prayer meeting at such a time and place.'"

In 1771 Mrs. Crosby wrote a letter to Wesley to ask his advice and direction for Miss Bosanquet on the same point. With the sound judgment and calm, good sense which distinguished her she argues that from the Scriptures it is clear that occasionally women had an extraordinary call to preach. For herself she concludes, "If I did not believe I had an extraordinary call, I would not act in an extraordinary manner." Wesley's reply expresses his mature and final opinion:

"MY DEAR SISTER: I think the strength of the cause rests there; on your having an extraordinary call. So I am persuaded has every one of our lay preachers; otherwise I could not countenance his preaching at all. It is plain to me that the whole work of God termed Methodism is an extraordinary dispensation of his providence. Therefore I do not wonder if

several things occur therein which do not fall under ordinary rules of discipline. St. Paul's ordinary rule was, 'I permit not a woman to speak in the congregation.' Yet in extraordinary cases he made a few exceptions; at Corinth, in particular.

"I am, my dear sister, your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."

This letter greatly cheered Mrs. Crosby as well as Miss Bosanquet. Mrs. Crosby conducted services all over Yorkshire, in open fields, barns, and chapels. The Rev. John Pawson invited her to the Old Boggart House, at Leeds. At Whitby she met Wesley, whose prayer, that she "might always be taught and led by the unction of the Holy One," much affected her. In one year she rode nine hundred and sixty miles, conducted two hundred and twenty public services, and about six hundred classes

FACSIMILE OF A PART OF A LETTER BY MRS. CROSBY.

May the God of Peace, & Love, & still with you, & bless you
My Dear Friend, is the most excellent way, & fill the precious
Soul with every blessing, of the most & everlasting Love, & mercy
is the desire, & prayer of
The Peacefull Band of the Spirit
J. Crosby

and other meetings. After Mrs. Fletcher's marriage she lived in the house adjoining the Old Boggart House. She died eleven years before her friend, and was buried in 1804 in the same grave as her two fellow-workers in the orphanage—Mrs. Ryan and Miss Tripp. Their tombstone appears in the foreground of the view of Leeds parish church.

Mary Bosanquet had removed from Leytonstone to Cross Hall, Yorkshire, when she received Wesley's letter. Little by little, like her friend, she had been led to speak to mixed assemblies in public. Wesley describes her manner as "smooth, easy, and natural, even when the sense is deep and strong;" and this calm fervor often wrought wonderful effects. Her words were "as fire, conveying both light and heat to the hearts of all that heard her." Her voice, which she managed with great skill, could be heard well in the open air. Yet she often shrank with natural modesty from the public work which she felt to be her duty, dreading lest godless hearers should esteem her a shameless woman. But there was a majesty of virtue in her look and bearing which commanded respect even from the scoffer and the sot.

On the moors near Huddersfield, after a hot ride of twenty miles, she found a crowd of between two and three thousand people waiting to hear her. She addressed them from the edge of a spacious quarry. "They stood like people in a maze, and seemed as if they could never have enough." The next time she passed through Huddersfield streets we find her almost carried from the "room" by the throng. Her head swam with the heat. Standing on a horseblock in the street, she "gave out 'Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,'" and during the singing recovered strength to "enlarge" (she avoids the term "preach") "on these words, 'The Lord is

our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us.'"
"So solemn a time I have seldom known; my voice was clear enough to reach them all, and when we concluded I



DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH.

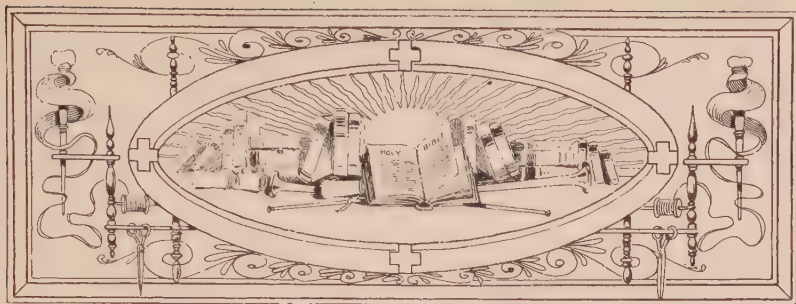
LEEDS PARISH CHURCH.

In the foreground is the grave of Mrs. Sarah Crosby and her Methodist sisters.

felt stronger than when we began." She conversed with the women, who would not leave her, in a room with "a damp stone floor," till near ten, "rested under the shadow of the Almighty till morning," and then "came home with much thankfulness and peace."

Mary Bosanquet was asked by many, "If you are called to

preach, why do you not do it constantly, and take a round as a preacher?" She answered, "Because that is not my call. I have many duties to attend to, and many cares which they know nothing about. I must therefore leave myself to his guidance who hath the sole right of disposing of me." Again, she tells us, they asked, "Why do you not give out, 'I am to preach?' Why call it meeting?" She answered, "Because that suits my design best. First, it is less ostentatious. Secondly, it leaves me at liberty to speak more or less, as I feel myself led. Thirdly, it gives less offense to those who watch for it." Thus she uses her gifts with discretion, as tenderly sensitive to inward impressions, which she believed were wrought by the Holy Spirit, as the saintly Quaker women like Elizabeth Fry and Mary Capper. For thirteen years she toiled at Cross Hall, sometimes in great financial straits, sometimes slandered, but comforted by the friendships of which we must tell more in our next chapter, and ever praying, "Only make me what thou wouldst have me to be, and then lead me as thou wilt."



CHAPTER C

Mary Fletcher and Her Sister Saints

THE ROMANCE OF MADELEY VICARAGE.—VARIOUS TYPES OF METHODIST WOMANHOOD.—LADY MARY FITZGERALD, "THE LILY AMONG THORNS."—ELIZABETH RITCHIE MORTIMER.

THE romantic story of John Fletcher's love for Mary Bosanquet would form a theme for a "Methodist Idyl," but it cannot be fully told here. For twenty-five years Fletcher had cherished affection for her, though he had not confessed it, and they had neither met nor corresponded for fifteen years. And she artlessly tells how she had no other thought "but devoting herself to God in a single life; only, I remember, I sometimes thought, were I to be married to Mr. Fletcher, would he not be rather a help than a hindrance to my soul? But it was only a thought." The tender thought, however, would not leave her. "It is sometimes presented to my mind," she said to a friend, "that I should be called to marry Mr. Fletcher." The friend, Mrs. Ryan, with good sense, replied: "I like him the best of any man, if ever you do take that step. But unless he should be of a very tender disposition toward you, you would not be happy. God will direct you." News coming of his illness, the tender thought came again. "These thoughts came

to my mind, 'If the Lord should raise him up, and he should propose such a step, could I doubt its being of God?' I cried to the Lord to keep me in the narrow way, whatever I might suffer, and felt an unaccountable liberty to ask the following signs: 1. That Mr. Fletcher might be raised up. 2. That he might be brought back to England. 3. That he would write to me on the subject before he saw me. 4. That he would in that letter tell me it had been the object of his



DRAWN BY J. D. WOODWARD.

FROM A WOODCUT.

CROSS HALL.

The Home of Mary Bosanquet.

thoughts and prayers for some years." Four years passed. Mr. Fletcher was raised up, returned to England, wrote to her, told her that he had cherished love for her for twenty-five years. Would she be his wife? She consented; and, though the freshness of youth had passed, never did a union prove more ideal.

The inmates of Cross Hall were provided for, and one child was adopted and became the joy and solace of the

Madeley vicarage—Sarah Lawrence, who grew up into an evangelist of grace and power, and formed one of the group of noble Methodist women.

In the old church at Batley Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher “covenanted to bear each other’s burdens and to become one forever.” Only four years of that “forever” were to be spent on earth, but they were years of perfect wedded happiness. She married “his parish,” shared all his noble toil, and during her long widowhood “carried on his work at Madeley in his very spirit, until, full twenty-four years after Wesley, she also passed away.

“The story of her last years,” well says Miss A. E. Keeling, “is full of tranquil beauty:

An old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Did lead her to the grave.

“Across that mild sunshine the tremendous events which shook all Europe during the last decades of her life threw only passing shadows. It cannot be said that her Journal makes no reference to the convulsions that filled so many hearts with fear; but such references are very few, and betray no apprehension. In the last year of her life, the Waterloo year, 1815, an event occurred too near at hand which did deeply disturb her, to the point of calling forth a solemn protest. The curate newly appointed to Madeley insisted that the Methodists of the parish must give up their connection with the Church; he ‘always thought it best for the Church people and the people called Methodists to move in distinct lines.’

“The division resulting from this unwise resolve was bitter to Mrs. Fletcher. Nothing could shake her determination to die among ‘the people united to Mr. Wesley,’ with

whom she had lived in fellowship for more than threescore years, but she had an inbred love for the Church of England, from which she was now in a manner banished by the harsh act of its minister. 'I have always,' she said, 'considered



FROM A COPPERPLATE.

MRS. JOHN FLETCHER.

myself a member of the Church, and so have the united friends in Madeley. In some measure we are now pushed out!'

"Fletcher's saintly widow might well have been allowed to linger out her last days undisturbed by intolerant folly of this kind. Happily she was able to rest in the conviction

that the Lord would order all, and to see in the continued prosperity of his work a pledge that her trust was well founded. But this thing which befell in Madeley is worthy of notice, being a typical instance of the separation effected in many a quiet parish, by clerical action, between Churchman and Methodist who had asked nothing better than still to worship together as they had done of yore, but who, once divided, have never been reunited, and in human likelihood never will be."

The writer from whom we have just quoted has pointed out the distinct types of Christian excellence presented by Susanna Wesley and Mary Fletcher. "The calm, lofty mood of Susanna Wesley's piety, the masculine strength of her intelligence, find their contrast in the impassioned devotion of Mary Fletcher; in the quick, imaginative intuition by which she divined the truth instead of reasoning herself into it." The circumstances of their lives were equally diverse. Susanna Wesley's work was wrought with isolation. She had few women friends. It was far otherwise with Mary Fletcher, who was thrust outside the charmed domestic circle into the glare of publicity, but who received from the very outset of her career the counsel and sympathy of a circle of like-minded Christian women. Lady Maxwell, Lady Hope, Mrs. Crosby, Mrs. Ryan, and Miss Tripp have been already noticed. Among others were Lady Mary Fitzgerald, Elizabeth Ritchie (Mrs. Mortimer), Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers, and a group of devoted women who were associated in public work. Mrs. Ann Thornton, the wife of one of the leading lay evangelicals of whom we must give an account later, was the type of another circle of friends, not distinctively Wesleyan Methodists, who were helpers and correspondents of Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher. These noble women also represent remarka-

ble diversity in early training, in social position, and types of spiritual character, but these sister saints were one in their fruitful consecration and service. Methodism has produced no dull uniformity in its woman saints. It has not destroyed the individuality of its daughters. It has found free play



AFTER A DRAWING BY RAYNOR.

PARISH CHURCH OF BATLEY.

Where John Fletcher and Mary Bosanquet were married.

for a marvelous diversity of gifts in the home, the orphanage, the class room, the school, the mission, and, more recently, in the literary circle.

Lady Mary Fitzgerald, one of the saintliest of Mrs. Fletcher's friends, was a daughter of Lord John Hervey, the cynical and treacherous "Boswell of George II and Queen Caroline," as he has been called by the editor of his terrible Memoirs. Pope lashed him for his

Beauty that shocks you, parts that none will trust,
Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust ;

and bitterly did Lord Hervey retort, taunting the poet of "hard heart" on his "birth obscure." His family was notorious, even in that age of profligacy, for shameful vice.

One of his three sons was the infamous Bishop of Derby, who held his office for thirty years, but was compelled to close his dishonorable career at Naples. His brothers were as vicious, but were not, at least, in "holy orders." In the midst of this family Lady Mary grew up, to become the brilliant Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess Amelia Sophia. She was married, after the fashion of her day, to a husband of distinguished family, George Fitzgerald, whose outrageous conduct soon compelled her to obtain by course of law a separate maintenance. Their eldest son, a young man of brilliant gifts, in a fit of passion shot his coachman, and was executed for the murder. Before he died he published a volume of scandalous records of the wretched quarrels of his family.

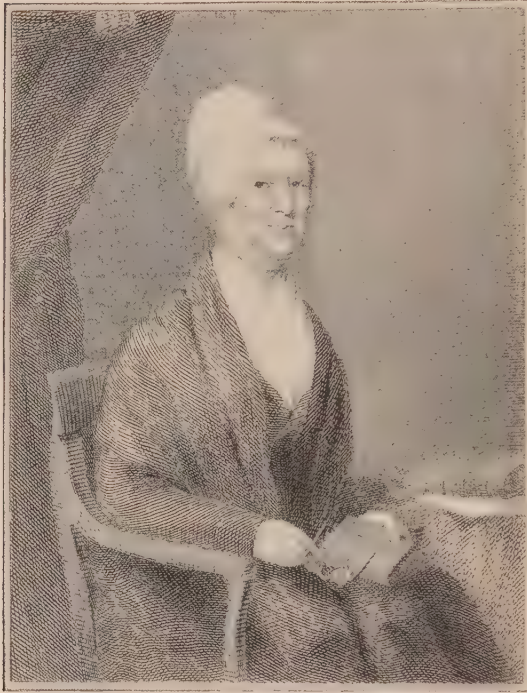


FROM THE COPPERPLATE BY HOPWOOD, JR.

MRS. ANN THORNTON.

Such were the surroundings and the sorrows of this lady of the court who was attracted in the prime of life by the Gospel of the despised Methodists. She joined one of Wesley's classes, and, like Lady Maxwell, retained her union with his societies to the end of the long life which she filled with works of mercy. "There seems to have been," writes a friend, "a singular sweetness, purity, and tenderness in her

piety; and a sort of atmosphere of light surrounding her, which, contrasting strongly with the dark and stormy scenes



FROM A COPPERPLATE.

MRS. ELIZABETH RITCHIE MORTIMER.

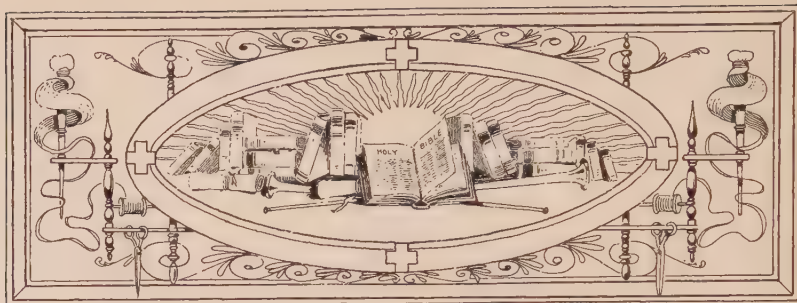
of her early life, recalls the tender Scripture phrase, 'a lily among thorns.' "

She passed away in the same year as her friend Mrs. Fletcher. Her physician noted the "kind, gentle, affectionate spirit" of the Methodist of ninety years. "She was an incarnate angel!" he exclaimed. "There was a sort of heavenly atmosphere around her," said another who

knew her well, and who found conversation with her more convincing as to the truth of religion than "any book or sermon, however excellent." Her body was laid by her own request in the City Road burying ground, and in the chapel is a tablet placed there by her grandson—one, at least, of her descendants who perceived the beauty of her life and revered her memory.

An intimate friend of Lady Mary Fitzgerald and the Fletchers was Miss Elizabeth Ritchie, who in her later years

became Mrs. Mortimer. Her portrait suggests the dignity, strength, and sweetness of her character, and the "soft austerity of the old Methodist costume, the close high cap and spotless kerchief," well becomes her. She was the daughter of a naval surgeon, and her parents were both Methodists, but she was adopted by a 'wealthy friend, in whose fashionable circle she learned to be ashamed of her early training. "Plays, cards, and company" engrossed her, but her restless heart grew weary of them, and we find her at eighteen renouncing them as "mean and trifling, unworthy the pursuit of a rational and immortal being." She became a devoted Methodist, accompanied Wesley on some of his missionary journeys, and, though she did not preach, like her friend Mrs. Fletcher, she was an indefatigable visitor of the societies, a teacher, nurse, and daughter of consolation to multitudes in the course of a life of fourscore years. Wesley watched over her with a father's care, as his many letters to her show, and we shall find her at City Road House during the last two months of the life of her venerable friend.



CHAPTER CI

Heroines of the Home, the Prison, and the School

HESTER ANN ROGERS AND HER QUEST.—A GROUP OF MINISTERING WOMEN.—A NORFOLK WOMAN AND THE CONFERENCE.—MARTYRS OF PHILANTHROPY.—A CANNY SCOTCHWOMAN.—“FOR HER SAKE KEEP GOING.”—WISE AND WITTY LETTERS BY WESLEY.—THE HEROIC BARBARA HECK.

IN Marshall Claxton's well-known picture of the group around Wesley's deathbed is the kneeling figure, with her face turned heavenward, of another of this circle of women workers, Hester Ann (Roe) Rogers. She is almost as well known as Mrs. Fletcher, through her touching Letters and Memoirs. The death of her father, a devoted clergyman, when she was ten, almost broke her heart. Her friends thought that dancing and novel-reading would divert the child's mind from her loss. Neither Edgeworth nor Austen had then written. Richardson, Fielding, Smollet, and their school were popular. With uneasy conscience the girl read all the novels she could obtain. For confirmation she felt utterly unfit, and knelt almost fainting before the bishop. From novels she turned to Roman and English history, Rollin, Stackhouse, and similar solid volumes. The Rev. David Simpson, a Methodist clergyman—the author of

A Plea for Religion, famous in its day—was appointed to Macclesfield church, and his preaching convulsed the town.



FROM THE PAINTING BY CLAXTON.

ENGRAVED BY RITCHIE.

MRS. HESTER ANN ROGERS.

She grew angry and unhappy under his searching denuncia-

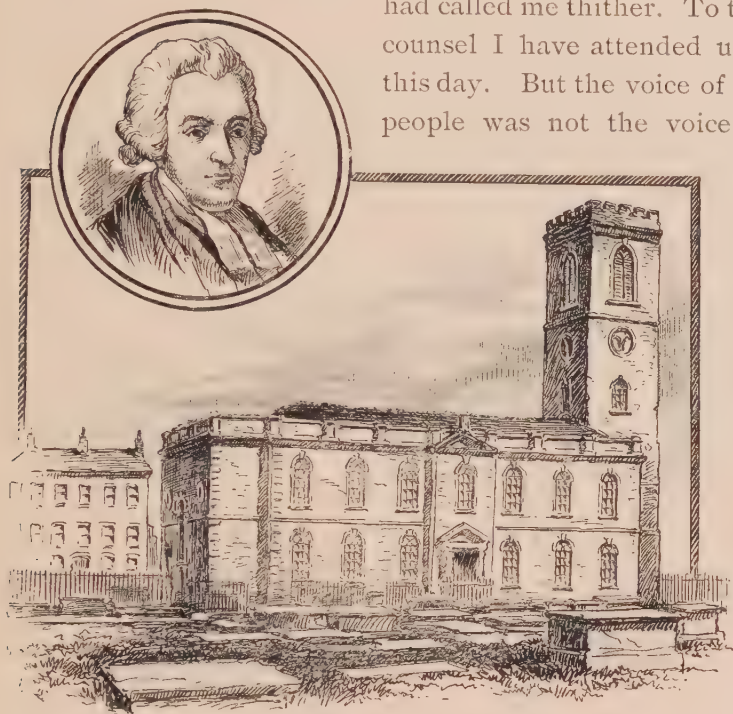
tion of worldliness. She wrenched herself from the pursuits which had entranced her. The last night she spent in a ball-room she danced until four o'clock in the morning. Then she renounced all, and dared to go at five o'clock one morning to a Methodist service. Simple-hearted, faithful Samuel Bardsley was the preacher, and his sermon on "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God," came with healing to her heart. She joined the Methodists, and was shut up in solitude, and afterward condemned to domestic drudgery, as maid-of-all-work, by her mother. Her health suffered; then she was allowed to follow her own course, and went about doing good with Lady Maxwell, Lady Fitzgerald, Mrs. Fletcher, and Miss Massey, of Buxton, afterward the wife of the Rev. Benjamin Gregory, senior.

As the happy wife of James Rogers, one of Wesley's most devoted preachers, she toiled beyond her strength, but with marvelous success. Classes quickly doubled and trebled under her care. At the close of Wesley's life she and her husband were living in the City Road house, and, as we have noted, were witnesses of his last hours. At the age of thirty-nine her work this side the grave was finished, although the life story of one of the whitest souls known to the annals of early Methodism rendered her influence wider after her death than during her life; but the sorrow of James Rogers, with his seven young children, was great indeed.

We have seen that Wesley recognized the "extraordinary call" of Sarah Crosby and Mrs. Fletcher as preachers. Later we find him giving even more decided encouragement to Miss Mallet (afterward Mrs. Boyce), whom he met at Long Stratton, in Norfolk, and of whose remarkable experience he gives an account in his Journal. He became to her, as

she well says, "a father and a faithful friend." Her own Journal is so suggestive and terse that it must tell its own story: "When I first traveled I followed Mr. Wesley's counsel, which was to let the voice of the people be to me the voice of God, and where I was sent for, to go, for the Lord

had called me thither. To this counsel I have attended unto this day. But the voice of the people was not the voice of



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

FROM WOODCUTS.

REV. D. SIMPSON, OF MACCLESFIELD, AND HIS CHURCH.

some preachers. Mr. Wesley soon made this easy by sending me a note from the Conference by Mr. Joseph Harper, which was as follows, 'We give the right hand of fellowship to Sarah Mallet, and have no objection to her being a preacher in our connection so long as she preaches the Methodist doctrine and attends to our discipline.' This was the order of

Mr. Wesley and the Conference of 1787. From that day I have been little opposed by preachers.

“The greatest part of my labors have been in Norfolk and Suffolk. For many years, when we had but few chapels in this country, I preached in the open air, in barns, and wagons. After I was married I was with my husband in the preachers’ plan for many years. He was a local preacher for thirty-two years, and finished his life and his work well. I am glad some of our preachers see it right to encourage female preaching. I hope they will all, both local and traveling preachers, think more on these words, ‘Quench not the Spirit,’ neither in themselves nor others; ‘Despise not prophesyings,’ no, not out of the mouth of a child; then would they be more like Mr. Wesley, and, I think, more like Christ.”

Another of the prophesying daughters of Methodism was Mrs. Ann Gilbert, who consulted John Wesley, about 1771, as to her public work. He took her by the hand, saying only, “Sister, do all the good you can.” One minister, who heard her preach in Redruth Chapel to fourteen hundred people, said that she had a torrent of softening eloquence which occasioned a general weeping through the whole congregation; and, what was more astonishing, she was blind, and had been so for many years. The Rev. W. Warrener, the first missionary to the West Indies, was converted under the preaching of another good woman, Miss Hurrell; and Miss J. E. Hellier, in the *Methodist Recorder*, 1895, mentions the names of Mrs. Holder, Mrs. E. Collett, Mrs. De Putron, and Mrs. Sarah Stevens; all of them ministers’ wives, who were preachers. Under the ministry of the last-named the late Rev. John Lomas realized the sense of sins forgiven. We must notice later Mrs. Taft and Mrs. Evans, the “Dinah

Morris" of George Eliot's *Adam Bede*, whose work extended into the nineteenth century.

We find the Methodist women at work in the prisons. Sarah Peters visited six condemned felons in Newgate in 1748, and led them to Christ. On their way to Tyburn gal-



JAMES ROGERS.

SAMUEL BARDSLEY.

lows spectators wept and officers looked affrighted as they sang the hymn beginning:

Lamb of God, whose bleeding love
We still recall to mind.

A fortnight after the execution Sarah Peters died of malignant fever, probably caught in the jail. "She was," says Wesley, "a lover of souls, a mother in Israel." We read of many like Elizabeth Duchesne, for "near forty years zealous of good works," and who shortened her days by laboring for the poor beyond her strength; Mrs. Kiteley, a perfect pat-

tern of true womanhood—a good wife, a good parent, a good mistress—who after many years of active benevolence redeemed a poor, friendless youth from prison, took the jail distemper, and died; Betty Brown, one of the first members at Wigan, of whom Wesley quotes her husband's words: "If I think right, she was the beloved of God, the delight of his children, a dread to wicked men, and a torment to devils."

Many of these good women were shrewd defenders of their Methodist charter. John Pawson tells of one poor old Scotch woman who was met in the street by the minister of the kirk:

"O Janet," said he, "where have ye been, woman? I have no seen ye at the kirk for long."

"I go," said Janet, "among the Methodists."

"Among the Methodists! Why, what gude get ye there, woman?"

"Glory to God," replied Janet, "I do get gude; for God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven me a' my sins!"

"Ah, Janet," said the minister, "be not high-minded, but fear; the devil is a cunning adversary."

"I dinna care a button for the deevil," answered Janet. "I've gotten him under my feet. I ken the deevil can do a muckle deal, but there is ane thing he canna do."

"What is that, Janet?"

"He canna shed abroad the love of God in my heart, and I am sure I've got it there!"

"Weel, weel," replied the good-tempered man, "uf ye have got it there, Janet, hold it fast, and never let it go!"

Wesley was always quick to encourage the faithful women who were sometimes the mainstay of the societies. For many a year Methodism at Poplar had a struggle for existence, and often was Wesley importuned to give up the preaching there, but his constant answer was, "Does the old woman (Mrs.

Clippingdale) who sits in the corner of the long pew still attend?" "O yes," was the reply, "she never misses." "Then, for her sake, keep going," was Wesley's rejoinder. The venerable woman who was thus the means of perpetuating Methodist preaching at Poplar was a native of Swalwell, near Newcastle, and at twelve years of age received her first society ticket, in 1745, from the hands of Wesley. Four years later she came to London, and continued a faithful Methodist for above seventy years.

One of Wesley's favorite correspondents was Miss Hannah Ball, of High Wycombe, whose work as the founder of one of the earliest Sunday schools must be noticed later. His letters to her reveal the secret of the deep spirituality that gave such strength and beauty of character to these typical Methodist women. To Hannah Ball Wesley writes: "Do you not remember that fine remark in the Christian Instructions, 'Nothing is more profitable to the soul than to be censured for a good action which we have done with a single eye?' Mr. W., then, may have profited you more than you thought. O it is a blessed thing to suffer in a good cause! I was never more struck than with a picture of a man lying upon straw, with this inscription: 'The true effigy of Francis Xavier, the apostle of the Indies, forsaken of all men, and dying in a cottage.' Here was a martyrdom, I had almost said, more glorious than that of St. Paul or St. Peter! O woman, remember the faith! Happy are you to whom it is given both to do and to suffer the will of God! It is by this means that he will confirm your soul against too great sensibility. It is then only too great when it hurts the body or unfits you for some part of your duty. Otherwise it is a blessed thing to sorrow after a godly sort. Whatever you read in the life of Mr. de Renty and Gregory Lopez, or the

experience of E. J., is for you. Christ is ready! all is ready! take it by simple faith!"

Wesley's opinion of Hannah Ball, and also of another of his lady correspondents, Miss Nancy Bolton, is expressed in a very characteristic letter, of which we give a facsimile.

Ever since that Madman
took away her Office in Wilney from Nancy
Bolton Wilney Society has drooped. Just
as Wycombe Society would do, if you took
away Hannah Ball from them. She has all
Hannah's Grace, with more Sense: See that
she be fully employed. You have not such
another Flower in all your Gardens. Even
Patty Chapman does not equal her.

LETTER FROM JOHN WESLEY TO MR. WOOLF.

Expressing Wesley's opinion of Hannah Ball, the pioneer Sunday school worker.

While these true women were toiling in England the heroic and unassuming Barbara Heck, whom we have noticed in an earlier chapter, was at work in America. She ought to live in the memory of all Methodist women, and to have an honored place in the history of modern Protestantism. The full story of her life-work finds its proper place in the American section of this work.



CHAPTER CII

Fletcher as the Seer of a Methodist Episcopal Church

WILL FLETCHER SUCCEED WESLEY?—"THE TIME HAS NOT YET COME."
 --THE RESURRECTION OF A REMARKABLE LETTER.—FLETCHER'S
 STARTLING SCHEME OF CHURCH REFORM.—THE GERM-SCHEME OF A
 METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.—"A CENTURY IN ADVANCE OF HIS
 AGE."

THE year 1773 was marked by two significant events in Methodist Church history. In January Wesley formally invited John Fletcher to become his successor, and in July the first Methodist Conference was held in America.

Wesley was now seventy years of age, his health was apparently failing, and he had been revising his manuscripts for his literary executor. He felt that Methodism had a world-wide mission, and his letter from the quiet vicarage of Shoreham, written twelve years before the death of his venerable friend Perronet, reveals his deep sense of responsibility for the mighty movement he had organized. "What an amazing work has God wrought in these kingdoms in less than forty years!" he writes. "And it not only continues, but increases, throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland; nay, it has lately spread into New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and Carolina. But the wise men of the world

say, 'When Mr. Wesley drops, then all this is at an end.' And Wesley himself fears this, 'unless, before God calls him hence, one is found to stand in his place. . . . I see more and more, unless there be one *προεστωρ*, the work can never be carried on.' At present he fears the preachers will not submit to one another. A leader they must have. 'But who is sufficient for these things?'"

Then, after describing the type of leader needed, Wesley declares to John Fletcher: "Thou art the man. God has given you a measure of loving faith and a single eye to his glory. He has given you some knowledge of men and things, particularly of the old plan of Methodism. You are blessed with some health, activity, and diligence, together with a degree of learning. And to all these he has lately added, by a way none could have foreseen, favor both with the preachers and the people. Come out, in the name of God! Come to the help of the Lord against the mighty! Come while I am alive and capable of labor! Come while I am able, God assisting, to build you up in faith, to ripen your gifts, and introduce you to the people! Nil tanti. What possible employment can you have which is of so great importance?"

Fletcher did not definitely decline Wesley's proposal, but he stated that he needed "a fuller persuasion that the time is quite come" to leave his work at Madeley. He hopes that Wesley may outlive him, but he promises, "Should Providence call you first, I shall do my best . . . to help your brother to gather the wreck, and keep together those who are not absolutely bent on throwing away the Methodist doctrines and discipline." He is willing to be an assistant; he has had thoughts of offering to become Wesley's deacon, and of offering his free services. Meantime he will seek divine guidance.

Wesley wrote to him again six months later. The original letter has recently come to light, and is here reproduced from the Methodist Recorder. Thirteen years later Wesley still doubted if his friend had done right in remaining in his parish. "I can never believe," says he, "it was the will of God that such a burning and shining light should be hid under a bushel. No; instead of being confined to a country village it ought to have shone in every corner of our land." He considered Fletcher far better qualified than even Whitefield "to sound an alarm through all the nation." He had a "far more striking person, equal good breeding, an equally winning address, together with a richer flow of fancy, a stronger understanding, a far greater treasure of learning, and, above all, a more deep and constant communion with the Father and with the Son Jesus Christ." Wesley the more deeply regretted Fletcher's "doubt" on the subject as Methodism extended beyond the Atlantic. Four of his itinerants were now in America, with many native workers, and the veteran still entertained the idea of crossing the seas, telling Asbury, the coming bishop, however, that the time of his coming over to America "is not yet."

Yet in the quiet vicarage of Madeley during the next two years Fletcher was brooding over a scheme of Church reform and polity in which we may trace the outline of the coming Methodist Episcopal Church of America. The remarkable letter in which Fletcher's startling proposals are stated was discovered a century later in the cellars of the Methodist Book Room in London. "Wesley," says Dr. Rigg, "must have preserved this letter because it was too interesting and important to be destroyed. He must have refrained from publishing it, or placing it in the hands of any one of his trusted friends and preachers for publication, because, interesting

and important as it is, he did not think the time was ripe or fit for its contents to be made public. Of its history during

Leamham
July 21. 1773

Dear Sir

It was a great satisfaction to me, that I had the opportunity wh. I so long desired, of spending a little time with you. And I really think it would answer many gracious Designs of Providence, were we to spend a little more time together. It might be of great advantage both to ourselves & to y^e People, who may otherwise soon be as Sheep without a Shepherd. You say indeed, "Whenever it pleases GOD to call me away, you will do all you can to help them". But will it not then be too late? You may then expect grievous w^olves to break in on every side: And many to arise from among themselves, speaking perverse things. Both the one & the other stand in awe of me, I do not care to encounter me. So that I am able, whether they will or no, to deliver the Flock into your hands. But no one else is. And it seems, that is the very time, when it may be done with the least difficulty. Just now the minds of the people in general, are on account of the Church greatly prejudiced in your favour. Should we not discern y^e providential time? Should we stay, till the impression is worn away?

LETTER OF JOHN WESLEY TO JOHN FLETCHER. 1.

the century since Wesley's death nothing is known. Of its

authenticity there can be no doubt. Its contents speak for themselves. The handwriting is Fletcher's own."

Just now we have an opportunity of breaking
the ice, of making a little trial. Mr. Fletcher, I am
in desirous of making an exchange with you
of spending two or more weeks at Madbury.
This might be done either now, or in October
when I hope to return from Bristol. And till
something of this kind is done, you will not have
that sympathy for the people, which alone can make
your labour light, in spending & being spent
for them. Methinks his pity we should lose any
time. For what a vapour is life!

Could not you spare a few days, to be
with us at the Conference? Probably it would
be a means of strengthening you. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your Affectionate Friend & Brother
J. Wesley.

LETTER OF JOHN WESLEY TO JOHN FLETCHER. II.

The letter was written in August, 1775. Wesley, then in

Ireland, a few weeks before had recovered from a malignant fever, and in a marvelous manner appeared to have renewed his youth. But his illness alarmed his preachers and had revived the question, "How could his work be carried on when he was gone?" From Ireland he had crossed to Yorkshire, to spend a few quiet days at Miss Bosanquet's orphanage and home of rest, Cross Hall, near Leeds, and thus prepare himself for the Conference. Fletcher had received a letter from Joseph Benson on the subject that was uppermost in many minds, and felt the special solemnity of the occasion. All writers agree in regarding Fletcher as a saint, but it would be difficult to find one who has credited him with the administrative insight and ability which the following letter reveals:

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, August 1, 1775.

REVD. AND DEAR SIR: This is the day your Conference with the Methodist preachers begins. As I prayed early in the morning that God would give you all the spirit of wisdom and love to consult about the spread of the power of godliness, the motion made by Mr. Benson in the letter I sent you came into my mind; and I saw it in a much more favorable light than I had done before. The wish of my soul was that you might be directed to see and weigh things in a proper manner. About the middle of the day, as I met with you in spirit, the matter occurred to me again in so strong a manner that I think it my duty to put my thoughts upon paper and send them to you.

You love the Church of England, and yet you are not blind to her freckles, nor insensible of her shackles. Your life is precarious; you have lately been shaken over the grave; you are spared, it may be, to take yet some important step which may influence generations yet unborn. What, sir, if you used your liberty as an Englishman, a Christian, a divine, and an extraordinary messenger of God? What, if with bold modesty you took a farther step toward the reformation of the Church of England? The admirers of the confessional and the gentlemen who have petitioned the Parliament from the Feathers' Tavern cry aloud that our Church stands in need of being reformed; but do not they want to corrupt her in some things, while they talk of reforming her in others? Now, sir, God has given you that light, that influence, and that intrepidity which many of those gentlemen have not. You can reform, so far as your influence goes, without perverting; and, indeed, you have done it already. But have you done it professedly enough? Have you ever explicitly borne your testimony

against all the defects of our Church? Might you not do this without departing from your professed attachment to her? Nay, might you not, by this means, do her the greatest of services? If the mother who gave you suck were yet alive, could you not reverence her without reverencing her little whims and sinful peculiarities (if she had any)? If Alexander's good sense had not been clouded by his pride, would he have thought that his courtiers honored him when they awkwardly carried their head upon one shoulder, as he did, that they might look like him? I love the Church of England, I hope, as much as you do; but I do not love her so as to take her blemishes for ornaments. You know, sir, that she is almost totally deficient in discipline, and she publicly owns it herself every Ash Wednesday. What are her spiritual courts, in general, but a catchpenny? As for her doctrine, although it is pure upon the whole, you know that some specks of Pelagian, Calvinian, and popish dirt cleave to her articles, homilies, liturgy, and rubrics. These specks could with care be taken off, and doing it in the circle of your influence might, sooner or later, provoke our superiors to godly jealousy and a complete reformation. In order to this it is proposed: (1) That the growing body of the Methodists in Great Britain, Ireland, and America be formed into a general society—a daughter Church of our holy mother. (2) That this society shall recede from the Church of England in nothing but in some palpable defects, about doctrine, discipline, and unevangelical hierarchy. (3) That this society shall be the Methodist Church of England, ready to defend the as yet unmethodized Church against all the unjust attacks of the Dissenters—willing to submit to her in all things that are not unscriptural—approving of her ordination, partaking of her sacraments, and attending her service at every convenient opportunity. (4) That a pamphlet be published containing the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, rectified according to the purity of the Gospel, together with some needful alterations in the liturgy and homilies, such as the expunging of the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed, etc. (5) That Messrs. Wesley, the preachers, and the most substantial Methodists in London, in the name of the societies scattered through the kingdom, would draw up a petition and present it to the Archbishop of Canterbury, informing his grace, and by him the bench of the bishops, of this design; proposing the reformed articles of religion, asking the protection of the Church of England, begging that this step might not be considered as a schism, but only as an attempt to avail ourselves of the liberty of Englishmen and Protestants to serve God according to the purity of the Gospel, the strictness of primitive discipline, and the original design of the Church of England, which was to reform, so far as time and circumstances would allow, whatever needed reformation. (6) That this petition contain a request to the bishops to ordain the Methodist preachers which can pass their examination according to what is indispensably required in the canons of the Church. That instead of the ordinary testimonials the bishops would allow of testimonials signed by Messrs. Wesley and some more clergymen, who would make it their business to inquire into the morals and principles of the candidates for orders. And that, instead of a title, their lordships would accept of a bond signed by twelve

stewards of the Methodist societies, certifying that the candidate for holy orders shall have a proper maintenance. That if his grace, etc., does not condescend to grant this request, Messrs. Wesley will be obliged to take an irregular (not unevangelical) step, and to ordain upon a Church of England independent plan such lay preachers as appear to them qualified for holy orders.

Then follow suggestions as to the trial of candidates and the exercise of discipline, and under (9), "that when Messrs. Wesley are dead the power of ordination be lodged in three or five of the most steady Methodist ministers, under the title of moderators, who shall overlook the flocks and the other preachers as Mr. Wesley does now." Under (10-12) the Prayer Book is to be revised, confirmation is to be performed with the utmost solemnity by Mr. Wesley or the moderators, and (13) enjoins that the doctrine of grace shall be preached against the Socinians, the doctrine of justice against the Calvinists, and the doctrine of holiness against all the world. The letter closes with a proposal that Kingswood School shall be used for the training of candidates for "Methodist orders," the education of the preachers' children, and as a home for worn-out ministers. Then comes the postscript, of which we reproduce the closing lines.

In the first part of his letter Fletcher refers to two opposite parties in the Established Church, both of whom cry out for reform. These were the "admirers of the confessional," on the one hand, and the "gentlemen who have petitioned Parliament from the Feathers' Tavern," on the other. The first body was composed of the remains of the non-juring and Jacobite Church party. The second was a very mixed body of latitudinarians and a few evangelical friends of Dissenters, led by Francis Blackburne, Archdeacon of Cleveland, who met at the Feathers' Tavern, and (1772) petitioned Parliament to abolish clerical subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles and the Creeds. The petition was in favor of

a simple acknowledgment of the truth of Scripture without human explanations. It received two hundred and fifty signatures, including those of thirty or forty physicians and lawyers. The famous Edmund Burke opposed it, and was caricatured by Gilray as a High Churchman wearing a cardinal's hat. But the growing body of evangelicals also opposed it, fearing, as did Fletcher, the Arianism and Socinianism of some of its supporters.

It will be seen that Fletcher thought that Wesley might secure the much-needed reform "without

CLOSING PASSAGE OF POSTSCRIPT OF FLETCHER'S REMARKABLE LETTER.

I send you my
 verbal, that if there is any thing there, in ^{your} ~~another~~ ~~letter~~
 attention, you may have it, while you can get counsel with
 the preacher. That the God of all grace may provide
 over your every ~~disturbance~~ ^{disturbance}, dear Sir, the assurance
 of your affectionate son & friend is the poorest
 Dr. Thacker.

pervverting;" that Methodism might exist in ecclesiastical form as a Church within a Church, or as a Church branch of the Mother Church, but with a power of expansion to Ireland, the colonies, and the work beyond; the Articles and Prayer Book might be purged from unevangelical elements, to meet the scruples of many Methodists, and the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed might be omitted. The Methodist superintendent preachers might be episcopally ordained presbyters, and their helpers deacons. If the bishops would not ordain, let the Wesleys do so.

Dr. Rigg thinks it probable that this scheme of Fletcher represented the opinions and predilections, perhaps we may say the dreams, not of John Wesley, or his more stalwart Methodist assistants, such as Joseph Cownley, but of Charles Wesley, with whom Fletcher was perhaps more closely joined in loving intimacy than with John; and of such students and scholars of a certain ecclesiastical stamp among the preachers as Joseph Benson. Nevertheless, such an admirer of Church order and early Christian models as Wesley, such a true Oxford-bred son of the English Church, however enlarged in his views and his philosophy of Church government by his wise later knowledge and experience, and his admiration in mature life of Puritan saints and scholars, could not fail sympathetically to read and regard Fletcher's striking and comprehensive proposals, though he did not see his way to do more than very partially to act upon them. He did partially act upon them in some important respects. He drew up a revised Prayer Book or Sunday Service for the independent Methodist Church, afterward the Methodist Episcopal Church of America. In this book the Thirty-nine Articles are reduced to twenty-four, the Athanasian Creed disappears, the Psalms are abridged. All

is adapted to a new people in a homely, pastoral country. Provision is made for independent Methodist ordination of deacons, presbyters, or elders, and the setting apart superintendents, or "bishops," to use the word which the Americans have chosen.

The suggestion in the letter, that a number of "moderators" should be chosen and set apart, by and among whom Wesley's work of superintendence should be divided and carried on after his decease, appears in germ in the scheme for the perpetuation of Methodism after Wesley's death which he himself

had read to the Conference, held also in Leeds, in 1769, six years before. In that scheme he proposed that after his decease a committee of three, five, or seven should be chosen, each of whom should be moderator in his turn, who should do what he himself then did in respect to the management of the Conference at its annual sittings; but in Fletcher's scheme the proposed moderators were



FROM THE SKETCH BY GILRAY.

BURKE AS A HIGH CHURCHMAN IN A
CARDINAL'S HAT.

to act between the Conferences. It is impossible not to recognize here the same idea which became dominant in American Methodism, and which some of Wesley's closest friends maintained that he desired to see realized in English Methodism after his decease.

Both Fletcher (1759) and Perronet (1762) had previously described the Methodist society as the "Methodist Church," and Wesley himself was now using the term, so that this was not a new departure. But "what was new was the frank boldness with which Fletcher would one hundred and twenty years ago have spread before the world and all the churches of the world the fact that by the labors of the Wesleys and their followers a new great Church—for not one nation, but all nations, something greater in its idea and its potentiality than a mere national Church—had actually been created; and that it was destined to prevail until it had replenished the earth. Here the independent race and nationality—the independent churchly ideas also—of the Swiss Reformed Churchman found voice and utterance. To Fletcher Methodism was already a great Church, potentially the greatest Church of the world."

This remarkable letter shows that Wesley was fully justified in designating Fletcher as his successor. Dr. Rigg justly concludes that those who seriously study this letter "will be inclined to say that Fletcher was, in foresight and range of imagination, almost a century in advance of his age. All Christians now acknowledge him to have been a saint of primitive character and unchallengeable sanctity. Will they be prepared also to recognize in him a sage and a seer in his vision of the designs of Providence for the future needs of the Christian Church and the enlarging circle of the nations?"



CHAPTER CIII

Embryo Presidents and Political Pamphleteers

TRAINING A DEMOSTHENES.—PLUNGING INTO POLITICS.—DECLINING
STATE PREFERMENT.—A CONTINENTAL VIEW OF ENGLISH FOLK.—
SOME EMINENT OPPONENTS.—THE METHODIST DOCTRINE OF THE
HOLY TRINITY.

JOHN FLETCHER, as we have seen, did not consent to become the successor of Wesley. "God has lately shaken Mr. Wesley over the grave," he wrote to Benson in 1775, "but I believe, from the strength of his constitution and the weakness of mine, he will survive me; so that I do not scheme about helping to make up the gap when that great tree shall fall." He was willing, however, to accompany Wesley as his traveling assistant, and rode with him on a round of twelve hundred miles. He was benefited by the exercise, and Wesley believed that if he had continued it, he would have been restored. "The Lord keeps me hanging by a thread," wrote Fletcher. "He weighs me in the balance for life and death." At this time he was a bachelor, and was too regardless of rest and food, seldom taking regular meals unless he had company, and living on bread and cheese or fruit.

Although Fletcher would not become what Toplady called "the Bishop of Moorfields," he must ever be regarded as one

of the great leaders of the Methodist host. As a theologian he did much for the rising race of traveling preachers. He fired them with his own enthusiasm for righteousness. He provided them with two-edged swords, which, having served



FROM A CONTEMPORARY COPPERPLATE

THE DEMOSTHENES OF METHODISM.

their purpose in the great controversy, could be turned into plowshares in the coming days of peace. Several of the future presidents of the Conference felt the spell of his saintly life. Joseph Benson has been already noticed. Another was Samuel Bradburn, who left the cobbler's bench to

become the "Demosthenes of Methodism." The full story of his wonderful career must be told later; it must suffice here to note that he had just begun to exhort, and was sorely undecided as to his call to preach. He had read Fletcher's first four Checks. He had heard of his "sweet accessibility and saintly wisdom." So he devoted an Easter holiday to a pilgrimage to Madeley.

On entering the village he saw a man working in a garden, who, on his approach to make inquiries, said to him:

"You see, my brother, a fulfillment of the curse, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.'"

The young shoemaker informed him that he was a stranger in the place, and would very much like an introduction to the vicar, whom he wished to consult on an important matter.

"I am John Fletcher," said the laborer, and forthwith led him into the parsonage. When Bradburn had stated his perplexity, the good clergyman insisted on the young cobbler being his guest till he should be able to form a judgment on the question.

Fletcher was at that time hard at work on his Fifth Check to Antinomianism, and he employed Bradburn in looking out the texts which he wished to quote. They rose at daybreak every morning, and spent from two to three hours, the one in writing the other in collecting Scripture proofs. They then took a spell of manual labor, after which they breakfasted on gruel and had family prayer. Then followed hours of work in the study, after which the learned cleric and the unschooled cobbler took a round of pastoral visitation. On Easter Sunday Fletcher announced from the pulpit a special service to be held in the vicarage, at which he made the young shoemaker "stand and deliver" what must have been in more respects than one a "trial sermon."

Every night in Easter week Bradburn had to preach either in the Methodist meetinghouse or some collier's cottage, with Fletcher as a hearer. The parting words of Fletcher rang in his ears to the end of life. "My little David, go; and if you preach forty years, and save but a single soul, it will be worth all your labor." In the terrible moods of depression which were the penalty of Bradburn's genius, even when he scarce presumed to pray, he could always sob out, "God of Mr. Fletcher, bless me." He writes: "His example affected me the most. O that I may tread in his steps as he treads in the steps of Christ. The half was not told me. I returned fully resolved to devote myself to the Lord, and to preach whenever an occasion offered."

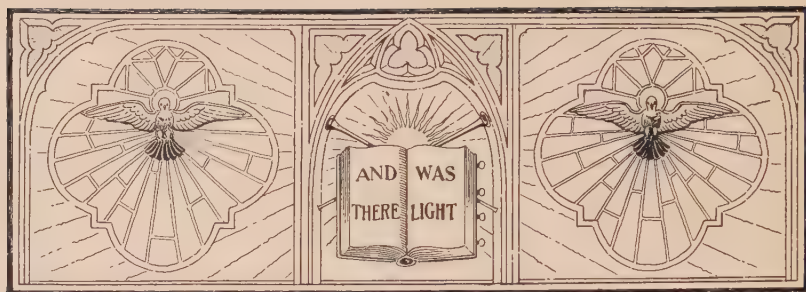
Dr. Thomas Coke was an obscure curate at South Pether-ton in 1775, and had not yet met Wesley, but he had read his sermons, and also Fletcher's Checks. He wrote to Fletcher to beg his prayers, and thank him for his writings, little imagining at that time that eight years afterward Fletcher would be one of the first twenty-six subscribers to the Methodist Society for the Establishment of Missions among the Heathen—which Coke and a few of his friends then formed.

Like his friend Wesley, Fletcher was drawn into the hot political controversy that raged over the American war. He described himself as "a republican by birth and education, and a subject of Great Britain by love of liberty and free choice." To Benson he wrote, "I have unaccountably launched into Christian politics, a branch of divinity too much neglected by some and too much attended to by others." Although he declared himself "as much in love with liberty as with loyalty," and contended for a "just medium" between the "high monarchial extreme" of Dr. Sacheverell

and the "high republican extreme" of Dr. Price, he was opposed to the action of the American colonists, and defended the government of King George III in requiring them to share taxation. Wesley tells us that one of Fletcher's pamphlets came into the hands of the Lord Chancellor and King George. The result was, an official was commissioned to ask Fletcher whether any preferment in the Church would be acceptable to him, or whether the Lord Chancellor could do him any service. Fletcher replied, to the amazement of the state officials, "I want nothing but more grace."

When Fletcher was on the continent, in 1779, he wrote to a nobleman, probably Lord North, on the national excitement and distress: "If the American colonies and the West India Islands are rent from the crown, there will not grow one ear of corn less in Great Britain. We shall still have the necessaries of life, and, what is more, the Gospel, and liberty to hear it. If the great springs of trade and wealth are cut off, good men will bear that loss without much sorrow; for springs of wealth are always springs of luxury, which, sooner or later, destroy the empires corrupted by wealth. Moral good may come out of our losses. I wish you may see it in England. People on the continent imagine they see it already in the English on their travels, who are said to behave with more wisdom and less haughtiness than they used to do."

Four years later Fletcher turned social reformer, and wrote a powerful appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord John Cavendish, on National Grievances, their Causes and Remedies, in which he draws a terrible picture of the misery caused by drunkenness, and begs for a suppression of many "paltry public houses," which are the "bane of the nation."



CHAPTER CIV

John Fletcher, the Saint

STRIKING UNANIMITY.—GENIAL MANHOOD AND CHILDLIKENESS.—A SYLVAN SCENE.—ANGEL OR MAN?—"THE PERPETUAL DOXOLOGY OF HIS COUNTENANCE."—SERAPHIC DEVOTION.—EQUILIBRIUM OF CHARACTER.

WRITERS of all schools agree in regarding John Fletcher as a saint of the highest type. Ryle, the evangelical bishop, is struck with this "agreement on all sides" that he was "permanently and peculiarly a most holy man, a saint indeed, a living epistle of Christ," whose "character stands above all praise." Canon Overton, the High Churchman, writes, "Never, perhaps, since the rise of Christianity has the mind which was in Christ Jesus been more faithfully copied than it was in the Vicar of Madeley." Southey, who, as Dr. Tholuck remarks, "never praises a Methodist without haughtiness," reveals unwonted spiritual susceptibility as he describes this "man of rare talents and rarer virtue. No age or country has ever produced a man of more fervent piety or more perfect charity; no Church has ever possessed a more apostolical minister." The philosophic critic, Isaac Taylor, concludes that "the Methodism of Fletcher was Christianity, as little lowered by admixture

of human infirmity as we may hope to find it anywhere on earth." "In a genuine sense he was a saint; . . . as unearthly a being as could tread the earth at all."

Yet this seraphic "unearthly being" was intensely human. In this he differed from most of the typical mediæval and patristic saints. He was a manly, witty, genial friend; a gallant, devoted husband; a charming traveling companion. He made merry with his friends, yet his social humor and courtesy often glowed with devotion. In vain did a clerical friend, who had been preaching for him, attempt to take from his hands the lantern on the dark, dirty road. "What, my brother," said Fletcher as he eluded his grasp, "have you been holding up the glorious light of the Gospel, and will you not permit me to hold this dim taper to your feet!" There was no taint of affectation in this habit which he had of "spiritualizing" the trivialities of daily converse. With gracious humor he would forbid his wife's apologies for breaking in upon his engrossing studies. Plodding work was no drudgery to him, as it sometimes is to men of his ardent temperament. His heavenly devotion did not destroy his interest in nature, literature, and human life. "We have a fine, shady wood near the lake," he wrote from Nyon in 1778, "where I can ride in the cool all the day, and enjoy the singing of a multitude of birds."

In his love of birds and love of children, Dr. Rigg has well observed, "He reminds us of that most loving and bright-hearted of Roman Catholic saints, Francis of Assisi, though he was a thorough Protestant evangelical." "The day I preached," he writes from Nyon, "I met with some children in my wood, walking or gathering strawberries. I spoke to them about our Father, our common Father; we felt a touch of brotherly affection. They said they would

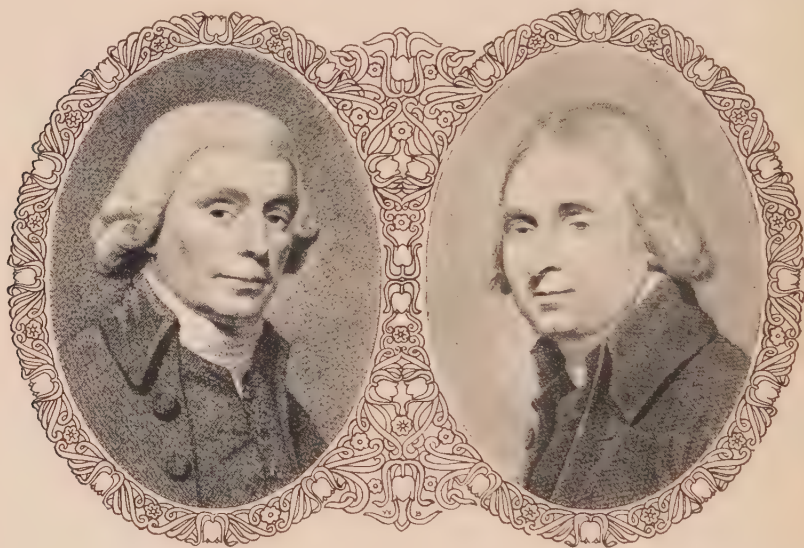
sing to their Father as well as the birds; and followed me, attempting to make such melody as you know is commonly made in these parts. The people of the house stopped them, saying I would not be troubled with children. They cried, and said they were sure I would not say so, for I was their good brother. The next day I inquired after them and invited them to come to me, which they have done every day since. I make them little hymns, which they sing." "The birds of my fine wood," he wrote to a friend, "have almost done singing, but I have met with a parcel of children whose hearts seemed turned toward singing the praises of God, and we sing every day from four to five (A. M.). Help us by your prayers."

Fletcher's "gracious naturalness," his "natural graciousness," his humor and his joy, not only gave him a charm for children, but for the Swiss wayside peasant, for the English cottager, and for all who were open to the fascination of a singularly childlike soul. Fletcher once lost his way on a dark night, and met a workingman of Coalbrookdale, named Michael Onions, who was on his way to fetch a fiddler for a dancing party at his cottage. Fletcher asked for the road home, and good-natured Michael went half a mile out of his road to show the muffled stranger his path. Conversation followed, and Michael was so impressed that, instead of proceeding, he returned to his own dwelling without the fiddler. "Why, what's the matter?" his friends asked. "You look ill and all of a tremble." Michael replied that he had met some one on the top of the woods, "but whether man or angel he knew not." Next Sunday Michael and some of his dancing friends were at Madeley church and in the voice of Fletcher he recognized the voice of the mysterious traveler he had met on Lincoln Hill. Michael was converted, became

one of the first Methodists in Coalbrookdale, and some of Fletcher's brotherly letters to him have been published.

It is an evidence of the candor and religious susceptibility of most of Fletcher's opponents that when they met him face to face they confessed the marvelous spiritual power of his personality. The Rev. Thomas Reader, a Dissenting minister at Taunton, once went to Madeley in great wrath to rebuke him for heresy. He knocked loudly at the vicarage door, told the servant who he was, and asked to see the vicar. Fletcher, knowing him by name, ran from his study with outstretched hands, exclaiming: "Come in, come in, thou blessed of the Lord! Am I so honored as to receive a visit from so esteemed a servant of my Master? Let us have a little prayer while refreshments are getting ready." Mr. Reader was puzzled. He remained three days, but could not muster courage even to intimate the object of his visit. Afterward he stated that he never enjoyed three such days of spiritual intercourse in his life. Strangers were at once entranced by Fletcher's very presence and aspect. In lovely Llangollen his fleeting visit was talked about for years by the people who had flocked to the inn to see and hear him in the early morning. His visit to Ireland, with Mrs. Fletcher, resulted in a wonderful revival, the society of five hundred members being doubled, to the great delight of Wesley's preachers, whom Mrs. Fletcher describes as "simple pious men who respect that command, 'In honor preferring one another.'" Henry Moore tells us that three years later the five hundred converts were proving faithful. Familiarity with Fletcher did not lessen this influence, as all his friends testify. They all observed the "perpetual doxology of his countenance." "A glow as of some reflected altar fire which rested on his face, whether in silence or in speech." When he

preached to the Huguenot refugees in the French Church at Dublin some of his Irish hearers were asked, "Why did you go to hear him when you could not understand a word he said?" They replied, "We went to look at him; for heaven seemed to beam from his countenance." Canon Liddon, in his *Some Elements of Religion*, thinks it "not too much to say that prayer has even physical effects. The countenance



EDWARD JACKSON.

THOMAS RUTHERFORD.

The preachers in Dublin at the time of Fletcher's visit.

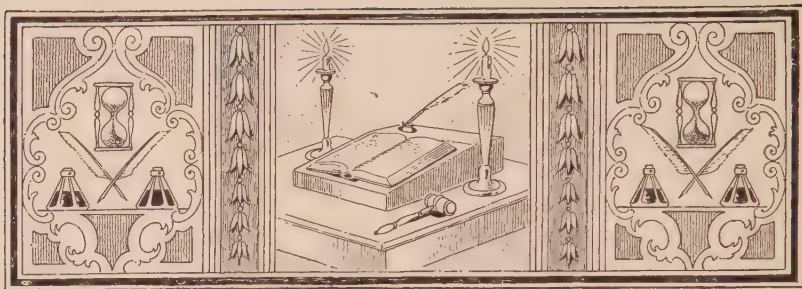
of a Fra Angelico reflects his spirit no less than does his art; the bright eye, the pure, elevated expression, speak for themselves. . . . To have lived in spirit on Mount Tabor during the years of a long life is to have caught in its closing hours some rays of the glory of the transfiguration." But long before the closing hours of a life all too short Fletcher's face was radiant with the beauty of the Lord his God.

The open secret of his illuminated countenance was his

habit of secret prayer and the spiritual exercise, "recollections," of which he himself said, "It makes the soul all eye, all ear." The Rev. Joshua Gilpin, in his introduction to the translation of Fletcher's French poem, *La Grace et la Nature*, says that in times of uncommon distress he continued whole nights in prayer, and "that part of the wall against which he was accustomed to kneel appeared deeply stained with the breath he had spent in fervent worship." His whole life, to use Mrs. Fletcher's word, was "perfumed" with prayer and praise. Yet, as another has recorded, with all this absorption, entrancement, in the unseen world, nothing more charmed or impressed those who approached him than a certain gracious gentleman-likeness which prevailed his whole bearing, tone, and air; his considerateness, and the easy and ease-imparting, unaffected deference with which he addressed even his inferiors. Wesley completes his picture of him with the lines paraphrased from Milton:

Grace was in all his steps, heaven in his eye,
In all his gestures sanctity and love.

It is true that in the heat of the conflict—"the rapture of the strife"—his impetuosity sometimes carried him too far; but the frankness and humility with which he confessed, deplored, and asked pardon for this, formed an ample compensation. His love to all saints was invincible, however repugnant to his convictions their tenets and their terminology might be. He would have replied to a universal excommunication by an ecumenical embrace. He declares, "They may build up a wall of partition between themselves and me, but in the strength of my God, whose love is as boundless as his immensity, 'I will leap over the wall.'" In this respect Fletcher and Wesley were not only in advance of their age, but in advance of every age, as yet, except that of the apostles.



CHAPTER CV

John Fletcher's Last Benedictions

HALLOWED MEMORIES OF CONFERENCE.—AN IMPROMPTU OPEN-AIR SACRAMENT.—DEVOTION AND DEBATE.—UNDER THE WINGS OF THE CHERUBIM.—“GOD IS LOVE! SHOUT! SHOUT ALOUD!”—MEMORIALS OF THE FLETCHERS.

THE Protestant saint was no recluse. John Fletcher's pure and lofty heavenly-mindedness did not alienate him from his age. His asceticism, as Mr. Macdonald has remarked, was “the asceticism of love, and not of bondage or of fear.” He was a Methodist of the Methodists, and he was delighted when Wesley succeeded in persuading the converts at Madeley to meet in class. He built a Methodist meetinghouse in his village, and regarded Christian fellowship as essential to a New Testament Church. He greeted the lay preachers as brethren, and his appearance at Wesley's Conferences produced the same remarkable spiritual impression on them as it did on his visitors and hearers elsewhere.

At the Bristol Conference of 1777 he was passing by the door of the stable belonging to Broadmead Chapel as Joseph Benson was alighting from his horse. “I shall never forget,” says Benson, “with what a heavenly air and sweet countenance he instantly came to me in the stable, and, in a

most solemn manner, put his hands upon my head, as if he had been ordaining me for the sacred office of the ministry, and prayed for, and blessed me, in the name of the Lord." When Fletcher entered the vestibule of the New Room the whole assembly instinctively stood up. Wesley advanced to receive him. One who was present describes Fletcher's "eyes sparkling with seraphic love;" his "holy and pathetic eloquence," which, before he had spoken a dozen sentences, moved a hundred preachers to tears. Then Wesley knelt by his side, the whole congress of preachers following his example, and closed his prayer with a "prophetic promise:" "He shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." Fletcher's whole appearance, as he leaned upon his friend, Mr. Ireland, seemed to bode that he stood on the verge of the grave; but he lived for eight more years, exerting all the zeal of a primitive missionary, and enjoying all the esteem of a holy patriarch.

James Rogers was now an itinerant of five years' standing. Passing through Bristol on his way to Cornwall with two of his "brethren," he tarried to visit Fletcher, who was staying at Mr. Ireland's house, near the city. When Rogers arrived Fletcher was returning from a ride. "Dismounting," says Rogers, "he came to us with arms spread open and eyes lifted up to heaven." He commenced at once to speak on the work of the Holy Spirit, and all hearts were melted. After further conversation on his favorite topic, the universal love of God, the travelers were about to leave when the footman came into the yard with a tray of refreshments. As they stood with uncovered heads Fletcher asked a blessing, which he had no sooner done than he handed the bread to each, pronouncing the words of the sacramental service, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve

thy soul and body unto everlasting life." He did the same with the wine. "Such a sacrament I never had before," writes Rogers; "a sense of the divine presence rested upon us all. . . . That hour more than repaid me for my whole journey from Edinburgh to Cornwall." Tyerman suggests that this scene of the open-air sacrament is worthy of being painted by a Methodist artist. Dr. Rigg remarks on these seasons in the life of Fletcher, when his whole consciousness seemed full to overflowing of the presence of the Lord Jesus: "Under such influences he said and did what might be confounded with extreme sacramental superstition, and yet had in it no taint of any such superstition. He believed in, and felt, and declared the living presence of the atoning Lord and Saviour; but not as realized through his official mediation, as episcopally ordained, or as in any way emanating from him. In this ecstasy of realizing faith, as he transformed the passing meal into a sacrament, he may have touched on the margin of Quaker mysticism; but at any rate he was very far from the mass, whether as taught by Rome, or, at the present time, by Anglican Neo-Papists."

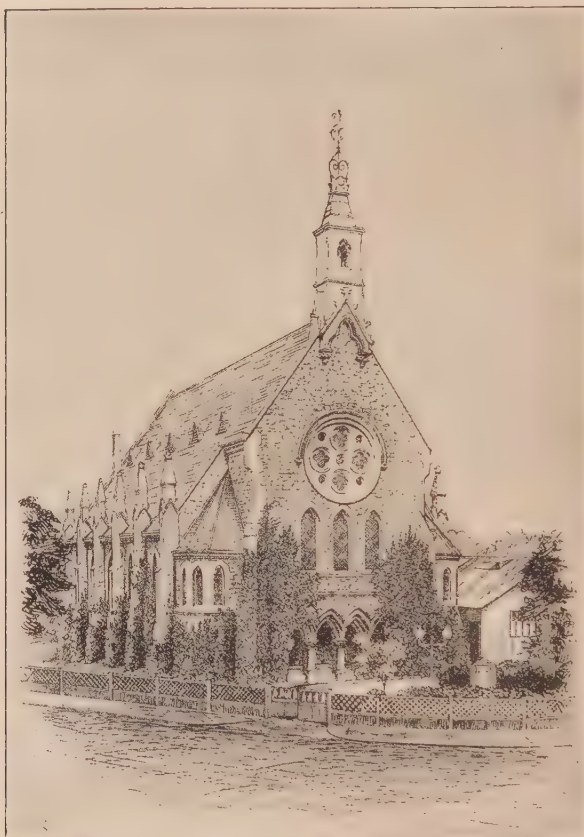
Fletcher attended the Leeds Conference of 1781, and preached at five o'clock in the morning to two thousand people. Joseph Pescod, one of Wesley's preachers, thought he had never seen "any man more like what I suppose the ancient apostles to have been." Wesley, Fletcher, and nine other clergymen administered the Lord's Supper in the old church, which was crowded in the afternoon when Wesley preached.

At one of the most important Conferences Wesley ever had Fletcher was again present (1784). Dr. Coke had just begun the Foreign Missionary Society, and Wesley had just signed his famous Deed of Declaration constituting the

Legal Conference. When Fletcher preached at seven on the Sunday morning, Henry Moore records, "The shadow of the divine presence was seen among us, and his going forth was in our sanctuary." The Conference was a critical one, and for seven days the new "deed" was debated. Fletcher was at prayer at two or three every morning. Turbulent brethren appealed against Wesley, but Fletcher acted as mediator. To Wesley, now eighty-one years of age, he said, "My father! my father! they have offended, but they are your children." To the disputing preachers, "My brethren! my brethren! he is your father!" Then he fell upon his knees and prayed until many were in tears and sobbed aloud.

When Wesley was about to read over his own name and those of all the preachers, that any present might object to whatever was deemed reprehensible in them, Fletcher rose to withdraw. He was eagerly recalled, and asked why he would leave them. "Because," said he, "it is improper and painful to my feelings for me to hear the minute failings of my brethren canvassed unless my own character were submitted to the same scrutiny." They promised that, if he would stay, his character should be investigated. On these terms he submitted; and when his name was read an aged preacher rose, bowed to him and said: "I have but one thing to object to Mr. Fletcher: God has given him a richer talent than his humility will suffer him duly to appreciate. In confining himself to Madeley he puts his light comparatively under a bushel." Fletcher pleaded the tender ties that bound him to his parish, and his increasing infirmities. Later in the Conference he rose, and addressing Wesley, said: "I fear my successor will not be interested in the work of God, and my flock may suffer. I have done what I could. I have built a chapel in Madeley Wood, and I hope, sir, you

will continue to supply it, and that Madeley may still be part of a Methodist circuit. If you please, I should be glad to be



MARY FLETCHER MEMORIAL WESLEYAN CHURCH,
LEYTONSTONE.

put down in the Minutes as a supernumerary." Wesley and his preachers were profoundly touched.

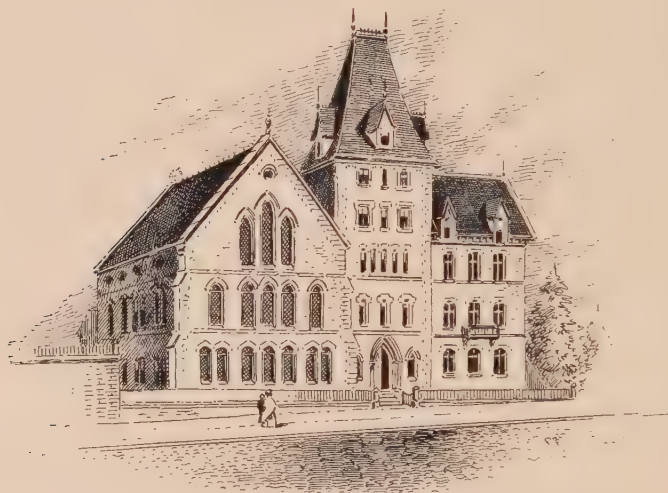
John Fletcher preached his last sermon at Madeley on August 7, 1785, on the text, "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." After

the sermon he went to the Communion table with the words, "I am going to throw myself under the wings of the cherubim, before the mercy-seat." He was carried fainting from the service to his room. The malignant fever prostrated him, but he had no delirium. "O my poor!" he cried. "What

will become of my poor!" "God is love! Shout! Shout aloud! I want a gust of praise to go to the ends of the earth!" The poor who came from a distance to attend the service on the Sunday following, and who were usually entertained at his house, begged to see him once more. They were allowed to pass along the gallery, and to take, through the opened door of his chamber, their final look at his beloved face. He died that night. "I know thy soul," said his wife, as she bent over him when he could no longer speak; "but, for the sake of others, if Jesus be present with thee, lift up thy right hand." Immediately it was raised. "If the prospect of glory sweetly opens before thee, repeat the sign." He instantly raised it again, and then a second time. He then threw it up as if he would reach the top of the bed. After this his hands moved no more, and he passed away as in sleep, August 14, 1785, in the fifty-sixth year of his age. "I was intimately acquainted with him," says John Wesley, "for about thirty years. I conversed with him morning, noon, and night, without the least reserve, during a journey of many hundred miles; and in all that time I never heard him speak one improper word nor saw him do an improper action. Many exemplary men have I known, holy in heart and life, within fourscore years; but one equal to him I have not known; one so inwardly and outwardly devoted to God. So unblamable a character in every respect I have not found either in Europe or America, and I scarce expect to find such another on this side of eternity." "A pattern of all holiness, scarce to be paralleled in a century!"

"Three years, nine months, and two days I have possessed my heavenly-minded husband," wrote Mrs. Fletcher; "but now the sun of my earthly joy is set forever." She lived on into the next century, continuing her evangelistic

work; maintaining a "House Beautiful" for pilgrim preachers and people. A chapel and college were erected to the memory of her husband at Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1867, and a chapel at Leytonstone, Essex, commemorates her life-work. In City Road Chapel is a marble tablet on which an

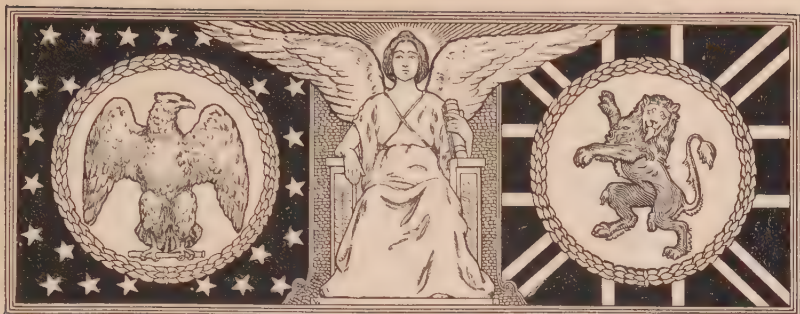


DRAWN BY P. E. FLINTOFF.

FROM A WOODCUT.

FLETCHER MEMORIAL CHAPEL AND COLLEGE, LAUSANNE.

inscription by Richard Watson describes Methodism's ideal saint, who, "beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, was changed into the same image, teaching by his own attainments, more than even by his writings, the fullness of the evangelical promises, and with what intimacy of communion man may walk with God." Nearly twenty years after his death Robert Crowther, whose circuit included Madeley, wrote of Fletcher and his abiding influence: "He, being dead, yet speaketh. He lives in the memory of hundreds, and his spirit and temper live in the people's hearts. Such a spirit of piety as prevailed for several miles in and about Madeley I had never before witnessed."



CHAPTER CVI

In the Days of the War of Independence

THE WESLEY OF AMERICA.—LET LOOSE ON A CONTINENT.—THE GATHERING TORNADO.—THE FIRST METHODIST CONFERENCE AND THE FIRST CONTINENTAL CONGRESS.—A NEW EPOCH IN THE HISTORY OF THE RACE.—THE SMOKE OF FRATRICIDAL WAR.—WESLEY AND DR. JOHNSON.—BISHOP ASBURY AND PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

IN the autumn of 1771 "The Wesley of America," Francis Asbury, sailed with his companion, Richard Wright, from the old port of Pill, near Bristol. When the Bristol Methodists provided the robust, ruddy, open-faced young countryman of twenty-six with £10 and a new suit of clothes they little knew that they were endowing and robing an apostolic bishop who would one day stand in the front rank of the heroes of Protestant Christianity. His father was a farmer of Handsworth, Staffordshire; a man of brain and backbone, with a book-loving wife. Young Asbury had heard the roar of the riots and the knock of Methodist refugees at the door of the old farmhouse. His was a goodly heritage of grace and common sense. Self-possessed, soldierlike, a man of few words, he developed an elevation of spirit, a statesmanlike sagacity, a prophetic vision, a paternal tenderness and easy dignity of manner, which well became the organizer of a great continental Church.

On Good Friday, 1773, another ship sailed from Pill, with four Methodists on board. One was Captain Thomas Webb, who, after six years' preaching in America, had come to England to plead at the Leeds Conference for more preachers for the far West. His companions were Thomas Rankin, whom we have met before as a hero of Scottish Methodism,



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

THE PORT OF PILL, NEAR BRISTOL.

Where Francis Asbury took ship for America.

and George Shadford, to whom Wesley had written a letter of imperial significance:

“DEAR GEORGE: The time is arrived for you to embark for America. You must go down to Bristol, where you will meet with T. Rankin, Captain Webb, and his wife. I let you loose, George, on the great continent of America. Publish your message in the open face of the sun, and do all the good you can.

“I am, dear George, yours affectionately,

JOHN WESLEY.”

Four weeks after these Methodists landed they attended the first American Methodist Conference, which was held at Philadelphia.

A political tornado was brewing in America. A month after the first Methodist Conference was held Benjamin Franklin, then in England, wrote to the Massachusetts Colonial Assembly urging the formation of a general Congress of the colonies. The first Continental Congress met on September 5, 1774, not yet aiming at independence of England, but petitioning for the redress of wrongs. "For genuine sagacity, for singular moderation, for solid wisdom," said the great Earl of Chatham, "the Congress of Philadelphia shines unrivaled." George Washington's massive sense, copious knowledge, and regal manhood already marked him an uncrowned king. He believed that England would yield to remonstrance. But His Majesty King George III maintained arrogant silence, and the Houses of Lords and of Commons refused to allow the address of Congress to be read.

The mass of the people of England in that day had no vote or voice in national government. Out of a population of eight millions only one hundred and sixty thousand were electors. Great towns like Manchester or Birmingham had no representative in Parliament, while petty boroughs with a score or two of villagers had members who were mere aristocratic pets and party puppets. The day of popular representation had not dawned, and the people had yet to win the right of self-government which the colonists claimed. Literary men, with Dr. Johnson as dictator, were blinded by prejudice or terrified by the muttering of revolutionary thunder. A few aristocratic families and their dependents practically ruled England, but their proud policy of coercion failed before the new spirit of freedom, which was giving unity to

the hitherto separated States and preparing them to become a great and independent nation.

And so the battle of Lexington was fought in 1775. Two months later, at Bunker's Hill, eleven hundred English soldiers and five hundred Americans lay dead or wounded on the fatal slope. Washington saw the last of the English soldiers file out of Boston on a March day in 1776, and on the fourth of that July the Declaration of Independence, drawn up by Thomas Jefferson, was adopted by Congress. Thus dawned a new epoch in the history of the Anglo-Saxon race.

How the victory of the colonists was followed by defeat; how Washington's army was weakened by withdrawal of short-service men; how the Congress took hasty flight from Philadelphia; how Washington's ragged handful of half-starved patriots faced Howe's army at Valley Forge, and the British General Burgoyne was defeated at Saratoga, and, at last, in 1781, Lord Cornwallis was forced to surrender at Yorktown; how, in the midst of the hurricane, Earl Chatham cried: "You cannot conquer America. If I were an American as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country I never would lay down my arms; never, never, never!" How he thundered against the employment of the Indians and their scalping knives as allies of England against her children, and, swooning in the House of Lords, was brought home to die; how these events electrified England, thrilled France, transformed the American colonies into States, and the States into a Commonwealth, every modern historian tells, and all these scenes are now viewed by Englishmen in lengthening perspective and in clearer light. But many of the most honest Christian Englishmen of that day could not see through the smoke of fratricidal war and

party fury, as the little band of Methodist preachers in America proved to their cost.

Even Wesley's vision became dim in the thick of the storm. During the first two years of the Revolution he was in sympathy with the colonists. On June 15, 1775, he wrote his now famous letter to Lord North and the Earl of Dartmouth. This letter was consigned to an official pigeonhole, and was first printed in full nearly a century later by Dr. George Smith. It has often been quoted since, notably by Bancroft, who, however, was misled as to its place in the story of Wesley's political change of view. "In spite of all my long-rooted prejudices," writes Wesley, "I cannot avoid thinking, if I think at all, that an oppressed people asked for nothing more than their legal rights, and that in the most modest and inoffensive manner that the nature of the thing would allow. But waiving this, waiving all considerations of right and wrong, I ask, Is it common sense to use force toward the Americans? Whatever has been affirmed, these men will not be frightened; and it seems they will not be conquered so easily as was at first imagined. They will probably dispute every inch of ground, and, if they die, die sword in hand. Indeed, some of our valiant officers say, 'Two thousand men will clear America of these rebels.' No, nor twenty thousand, be they rebels or not, nor perhaps treble that number. They are as strong men as you; they are as valiant as you, if not abundantly more valiant, for they are one and all enthusiasts—enthusiasts for liberty; and we know how this principle breathes into softer souls stern love of war, and thirst of vengeance, and contempt of death. We know men, animated with this spirit, will leap into fire or rush into a cannon's mouth. 'But they have no discipline.' Already they have near as much as our army, and they will

learn more of it every day, so in a short time they will understand it as well as their assailants. 'But they are divided among themselves.' So you are informed. So, doubt not, was Rehoboam informed concerning the ten tribes. So, nearer our own times, was Philip informed concerning the people of the Netherlands. No, my lord, they are terribly united. Not in the province of New England only, but down as low as the Jerseys and Pennsylvania. The bulk of the people are so united that to speak a word in favor of the present English measures would almost endanger a man's life. Those who informed me of this, one of whom was with me last week, lately come from Philadelphia, are no sycophants; they say nothing to curry favor. But they speak with sorrow of heart what they have seen with their own eyes and heard with their own ears.

"These men think, one and all, be it right or wrong, that they are contending *pro aris et focis*; for their wives, children, and liberty. What an advantage have they herein over many that fight only for pay! none of whom care a straw for the cause wherein they are engaged; most of whom strongly disapprove of it. Have they not another considerable advantage? Their supplies are at hand and all round about them. Ours are three thousand miles off! Are we then able to conquer the Americans, suppose they are left to themselves; suppose all our neighbors should stand stock-still and leave us and them to fight it out? But we are not sure of this. Nor are we sure that all our neighbors will stand stock-still."

The statesmen did not heed Wesley's warning. "His solemn predictions were fulfilled;" "To-day his letter reads like a history rather than a prophecy," are the comments of Buckley and McTyeire, as they look down the vista of the century.

But Wesley's view of the question between England and her colonies changed after he had read Dr. Samuel Johnson's *Taxation no Tyranny*, published in the autumn of 1775. He was convinced by that pamphlet that the colonists should be content with the military and naval protection of the mother country, and with obedience to its laws, without a vote in lawmaking and administration. Wesley published an abridgment of Dr. Johnson's pamphlet, under the title of *A Calm Address to the American Colonies*, naming the source of his tract only in a second edition.

Johnson wrote to Wesley thanking him for his "important suffrage to my argument on the American question. To have gained such a man as yourself may justly confirm me in my own opinion. What effect my paper has upon the public I know not; but I have no reason to be discouraged. The lecturer was surely in the right, who, though he saw his audience sinking away, refused to quit the chair while Plato stayed."

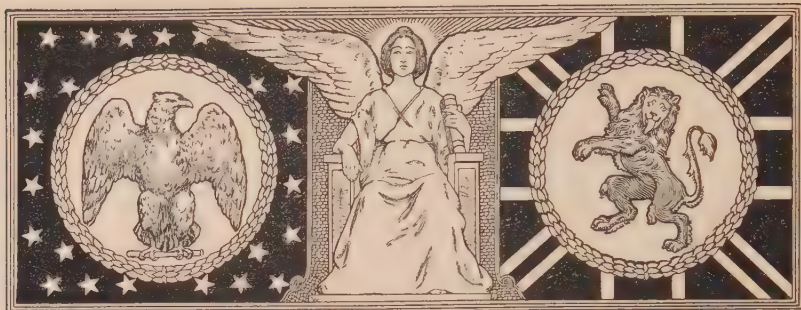
Next year Wesley published another pamphlet, entitled *Some Observations on Liberty*. The able American editor of Wesley's works, John Emory, expresses in a footnote the strong and decided American disapprobation of Wesley's views. Dr. Buckley regards Wesley as "absolutely honest, but his training and mode of thought made it impossible for him to sympathize with the colonists from the moment they determined upon revolution, and his horror of war intensified his feelings." Bishop McTyeire well remarks on the extreme infelicity of the case that, while the letter to Lord North lay buried in the state archives for nearly a century, the *Address to the Colonies* was published by tens of thousands of copies, creating serious difficulties for the American preachers.

With characteristic wisdom and charity Asbury thus comments on an "affectionate" letter which he received from Wesley: "I am truly sorry that the venerable man ever dipped into the politics of America. My desire is to live in love and peace with all men; to do them no harm, but all the good I can. However, it discovers Mr. Wesley's conscientious attachment to the government under which he lives. Had he been a subject of America, no doubt but he would have been as zealous an advocate of the American cause. But some inconsiderate persons have taken occasion to censure the Methodists in America on account of Mr. Wesley's political sentiments."

Such was Asbury's temperate statement of one of the difficulties which led to the return to England of all the English preachers excepting himself alone. "We saw we must part," said faithful George Shadford, "though we loved as David and Jonathan; and indeed these times made us love one another in a peculiar manner." He returned to England, where in honored old age we find him, though blind, leading a class of a hundred members. A surgical operation restored his sight. "You will have the pleasure," said the surgeon, "of seeing to use your knife and fork again." "Doctor," replied the veteran, "I shall have a greater pleasure—that of seeing to read my Bible."

Francis Asbury remained for a few months in retirement; the tornado of war swept past; Dr. Coke came out to ordain him bishop, and in 1785 the two friends dined with George Washington, who treated them with great courtesy, and expressed his concurrence in their views against slavery. Asbury resolved, with the indomitable Adams, "sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish," he would remain in the country of his adoption, and in 1789, in his official capacity,

he presented the address of the Methodist Conference in New York city to Washington, as President of the United States, and the guardian "of those civil and religious liberties which have been transmitted to us by the providence of God and the glorious Revolution." One of Asbury's American biographers well closes his life of the "Pioneer Bishop" with the declaration, "What the name of Washington is to the patriot American—a charm and a watchword in whatever pertains to American liberty—the name of Asbury is to the American Methodist in whatever concerns the genius and mission of Methodism."



CHAPTER CVII

Wesley's Revival of a Primitive Episcopacy

THE COLLAPSE OF THE ANGLICAN MISSION IN AMERICA.—THE CRY OF THE METHODIST PEOPLE.—JOHN WESLEY'S ORDINATIONS.—CHARLES WESLEY'S ALARM.—PRIMITIVE BISHOPS; NOT ANGLICAN PRELATES.—THE FIRST SACRAMENT OF A NEW CHURCH.

THE War of Independence wrecked the Established Church in America, and most of its clergy fled from their charges. They had never had a colonial bishop. All America was under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London! The colonists had appealed in vain for a resident diocesan. As early as 1716 one of the agents for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel wrote: "I don't pretend to prophesy, but you know how 'tis said the kingdom of God shall be taken from them and given to a nation that will bring forth the fruits of it. I cannot but think the honorable society had done more if they had found one honest man to bring the Gospel orders over to us." Even after the war, and after the Methodist bishops had begun their work, when the scattered adherents of Anglicanism sent the Rev. Samuel Seabury, of Connecticut, over to obtain consecration as a bishop, he "could get no English bishop to put him in the succession, but was obliged to go a-begging to Scotland,"



where the successors of the nonjurors ordained him. Poor "Bishop" Seabury's Scotch ordination brought him fresh humiliation on his return, for it was regarded as of doubtful validity!

The American Methodists, who had increased to eighteen thousand, had hitherto received the sacraments, when they could, from the clergy of the Establishment, although these officials were in some cases, according to the testimony of their own historians, as unfit for this ministration as many of their colleagues in England. Now the Methodists were left without any adequate provision for the baptism of their children and their converts, and for the Lord's Supper. They looked to Wesley as their "father," responsible for calling them into Christian fellowship. They appealed to him through Asbury for guidance. In 1779 their preachers in the South proposed that three of their number should ordain the rest, but Asbury persuaded them to await Wesley's decision.

The crisis was reached in 1784. Thirty-eight years earlier, as we have seen, Wesley had renounced the High Church dogma of apostolic succession, and had been convinced that in the primitive Church "bishops and presbyters were of the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain." He now proceeded to exercise that right. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Coke, a presbyter of the Established Church, had been for six years a Methodist preacher. In his study at City Road, London, Wesley first asked Dr. Coke to accept episcopal consecration at his hands and become "superintendent" (or bishop) of the societies in the United States. Coke asked for time to consider this innovation on the order of the Anglican Church. Wesley cited the example of the ancient Alexandrian Church, which for two hundred years had pro-

vided its bishops through ordination by its presbyters. Two months passed before Cokè wrote to Wesley accepting his proposal, though still suggesting delay. But on September 1, 1784, the momentous step was taken at Bristol. Richard Whatcoat thus records it in his Journal: "September 1, 1784, Rev. John Wesley, Thomas Coke, and James Creighton, presbyters of the Church of England, formed a presbytery and ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey deacons, and on September 2, by the same hands, etc., Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey were ordained elders, and Thomas Coke, LL.D., was ordained superintendent for the Church of God under our care in North America."

The ordination took place in Mr. Castleman's, 6 Dighton Street. Wesley gave Dr. Coke the certificate of which we produce a facsimile, commissioned him to ordain and consecrate Francis Asbury as "joint superintendent" on his arrival in America, and wrote a letter for circulation among the societies, which concludes with the significant words: "As our American brethren are now totally disentangled both from the State and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and primitive Church; and we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free."

Charles Wesley was shocked by what he considered to be a breach of Church order. He wrote to his friend Dr. Chandler: "I can scarcely yet believe it, that in his eighty-second year my brother, my old and intimate companion and friend, should have assumed the episcopal character, ordained elders, consecrated a bishop, and sent him to ordain our lay preachers in America. Lord Mansfield told me last



REV. THOMAS VASEY, AGE 36.

REV. RICHARD WHATCOAT.

REV. THOMAS COKE.

year that ordination was separation." He wrote to his brother begging him, before he had quite broken down the bridge, to stop and consider. But his brother had considered

To all to whom these Presents shall come, John Wesley, late Fellow of Lincoln College in Oxford, Pastor of the Church of England sendeth greeting.

Whereas many of the People in the Southern Provinces of North America who were to continue under my care, and till saith to the Doctrines and Discipline of the Church of England, are greatly distressed for want of Ministers to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper according to the usage of the said Church. And whereas there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with Ministers:

I have at this time called at this time to set apart some persons for the work of the Ministry in America. And therefore under the Protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this can set apart as a separation, by the imposition of my hands and prayer. (being assisted by other ordained Ministers.) Thomas Coke, Doctor of Civil Law, a Presbyter of the Church of England, a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern as a fit person to preside over the Flocks of Christ. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the second day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty four.

John Wesley

DR. COKE'S PARCHMENT.

the question for forty years, and the extraordinary need of America was not the only ground of his action. He based it upon Scripture, history, and reason. "I firmly believe," he replied, "that I am a scriptural *episcopos* as much as any man in England, or in Europe; for the uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable which no man ever did or can prove."

Charles Wesley remained unconvinced. His letters and notebooks reveal his strong feeling. The Rev. C. H. Kelly culls from one of these notebooks and observes: "He was a poet, but all his poetry was not on the same high level. (In all his verses about Dr. Coke he makes the name to rhyme as if pronounced 'Cook;' perhaps it was so in those days):

EPIGRAM.

W—— himself and friends betrays,
By his good sense forsook,
While suddenly his hands he lays
On the hot head of C—— :

Yet we at least should spare the weak,
His weak coevals we,
Nor blame an hoary schismatic,
A saint of eighty-three.

So easily are bishops made
By man's or woman's whim !
W—— his hands on C—— has laid,
But who laid hands on him ?

Hands on himself he laid, and took
An apostolic chair ;
And then ordained his creature C ——
His heir and successor.

There is much of the same sort, none better, more poorer. But it shows how mortified and troubled the good man was."

These rhymes, not intended for publication, must not be taken too seriously, nor must the suggestion be accepted that John Wesley's mental powers were enfeebled by age. Canon Overton, a Churchman who considers Wesley's action to have been utterly wrong, says with honorable candor: "It has been said that John Wesley's mental powers were failing when he began to 'set apart' his preachers; and Charles Wesley himself has countenanced the idea by exclaiming,

‘Twas age that made the breach, not he!’ But there really appear to be no traces of mental decay in any other respects.”

Wesley used the Latin designation “superintendent” rather than “bishop,” the more accurate rendering of the Greek *episcopos*. The latter word was associated in England with too much secular pomp to satisfy his simple tastes. It was not his wish to multiply bishops of the Anglican type. He desired a more primitive Church order; as Dr. Gregory has expressed it, “not prelatial, but presbyterial; not hierarchical, but evangelistic; not diocesan, but ‘itinerant.’” The term bishop, in this primitive sense, was afterward adopted by the Methodist Episcopal Church. Wesley raised no objection to the designation “Episcopal,” though he clung tenaciously to his term “superintendent.”

The history of the Methodist Episcopal Church shows that Wesley’s fear of the hierarchical use of the more simple and exact term “bishop” was groundless. Watson has well stated Wesley’s position. He “never did pretend to ordain bishops in the modern sense, but only according to his view of primitive episcopacy . . . founded upon the principle of bishops and presbyters being of the same degree; a more extended office only being assigned to the former, as in the



FROM A COPPERPLATE.

REV. JAMES CREIGHTON.

The clergyman who assisted at Dr. Coke's consecration.

primitive Church. For, though nothing can be more obvious than that the primitive pastors are called bishops or presbyters indiscriminately in the New Testament, yet at an early period those presbyters were, by way of distinction, denominated bishops, who presided in the meetings of the presbyters, and were finally invested with the government



DRAWN BY W. B. DAVIS.

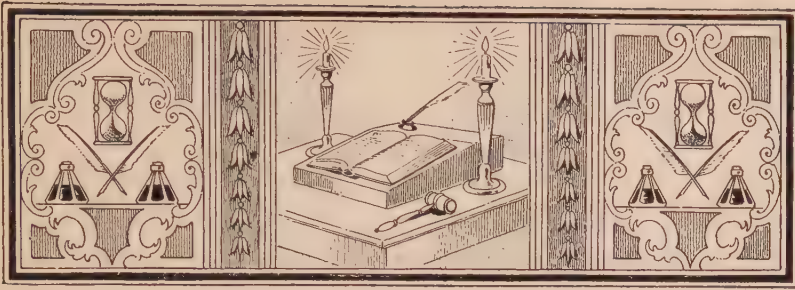
FROM A COPPERPLATE.

BISHOP LOWTH.

of several churches, with their respective presbyteries; so that two offices were then, as in this case, grafted upon the same order." The Methodist bishops, says Watson, "have in practice as well exemplified the primitive spirit as in principle they were conformed to the primitive discipline."

Eleven days after his arrival in America Dr. Coke was preach-

ing in Barrett's "chapel in the midst of a forest," where he had "a noble congregation." As he was preaching Francis Asbury entered, and an impressive scene followed as the representatives of the Methodism of the Old World and the New exchanged greetings.



CHAPTER CVIII

The Magna Charta of British Methodism

THE "CLIMACTERIC YEAR."—THE DEED OF DECLARATION.—SANCTIFIED SAGACITY.—DRIFTING FROM THE STATE CHURCH.—ORDINATION FOR BRITAIN.—ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.—DR. PUSEY'S ERROR.—"ORDINATION IS SEPARATION."

THE Methodist Church was born in 1739. It came of age in 1784. The latter year has been called the "climacteric year" of Methodism. It gave a definite answer to what Dr. Gregory calls "the inevitable question of inestimable importance: Is Methodism to be a restricted and dwindling association; or an ever-growing congeries of churches, evolving without restraint the vital force which gives it unity and guaranteeing its survival by its power of adaptation to its environment?" The Deed of Declaration, executed by Wesley on February 28, 1784, and the organization of American Methodism settled that question. Wesley's famous document is sometimes called his Poll Deed; the term for a deed executed by one person alone, in distinction from an "indenture," to which there are two or more parties. It legally defined the "Conference of the people called Methodists," and declared "how the succession and identity thereof is to be continued."

"The occasion was urgent," wrote William Arthur, just a

century later. "The long summer day of the unwearying laborer was drawing to a close. Already had he been for years traveling westward of that line where the shadow on the dial marks the assigned limit of threescore years and ten. He had become the father of a large family, and here and there his children had built a house. But as his children were not natural heirs, but 'children more securely dear'—sons in the immortal kindred of the Gospel—the buildings they had set up were not tenements for family convenience, but houses for prayer; for the glorious purposes of the Church of God. They had come into existence without the idea of creating property entering into any head; come, in fact, as a mere product of life, one of its necessities of self-sustentation, just as might come the covering shell of a living turtle, or the covering bark of a living oak. Yet, nevertheless, the houses, being once there, were as really property as either the tortoise shell or the oaken bark. And this property must fall to the guardianship of some human holders when the white old man should no longer dwell in houses made with hands."

The Deed of Declaration contained the names of a hundred preachers who were to be in the eye of the law what Wesley himself had been for forty years in relation to his societies and trust property. He had been carefully training his preachers for this responsibility. In a letter dated 1780 he had written, "I chose to exercise the power which God had given me through the Conference—both to avoid ostentation, and gently to habituate the people to obey them when I should be taken from their head." This Wesley now carried out more fully by merging his own authority in that of the Legal Conference. The Conference was to meet annually, fill up vacancies in its number, elect a president and sec-



THE THREE PREACHERS ORDAINED BY WESLEY IN CITY ROAD
CHAPEL, 1785.

REV. JOSEPH TAYLOR.

REV. THOMAS HANBY.

REV. JOHN PAWSON.

retary, station the preachers, admit preachers on trial and into full connection, and maintain the discipline and general oversight of the societies. The term of appointments for itinerant preachers was limited to three years. The deed was not kept in reserve until Wesley's death, as some writers have assumed, but five months after its execution it was acted upon at the Conference by the election of two preachers to fill vacancies in the Hundred, and by the formal signing of the Minutes. Wesley was chosen president year by year until his death. Five or six preachers who were annoyed by the omission of their names from the Hundred severed their connection with Wesley, but at the Conference of 1785 all the preachers present signed a document approving both of the substance and design of the deed.

Dr. Coke sent a copy of the document to every superintendent, and afterward published it for circulation among the societies. "It is a model of perspicuity," says Dr. Osborn; "free from technicalities, and also from that 'vile tautology of lawyers' to which Wesley had an almost morbid dislike." When the centenary of its enrollment was celebrated, in 1884, the eminent Methodist lawyer and member of Parliament, Mr. R. W. Perks, said that some eight or ten years before he had taken the deed down to the House of Lords, when he was carrying the bill through Parliament which became the "Methodist Conference Act," whereby the colonial churches of Methodism in Australasia, Canada, and elsewhere were enabled to secure complete independence in the management of their ecclesiastical affairs. The prevailing sentiment among the group of peers who clustered round the table on which the Deed of Declaration was laid out, and to which the name of the founder of Methodism was signed, was unbounded astonishment at the sagacity and acuteness

of the man who a century ago had managed, when very few family settlements covered less than fifteen or twenty skins

Bristol 29 July 1783

At a meeting held this day by the Trustees of the New Room in Bristol, to take into Consideration the propriety of Dr. Coh's Proposal, respecting the alteration of the Deed enabled irrevocably in Chancery, by the Rev. Mr. Wesley many years ago. They Having maturely & seriously weighed the great trust reposed in them, namely for the Use of the Methodist Church, in Connection with the Church of England, are of Opinion that they cannot conscientiously, legally, or justly, give up, or transfer the same, to any Persons whatever; they hold that trust with which they are invested to be sacred, that they stand in it accountable to God, to the Society of Bristol, & to all the World; — The Trustees have no desire, or wish, but to act in Concurrence with the Conference as long as they continue to support Mr. Wesley's Doctrine, & they hope the time will never come, in which they shall be witnesses to the contrary. Signed Henry Dearborn
Josh. Flower
Wm. Green
Wm. Pine
Wm. Hopkins
Robt. Burgess

PROTEST OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE "NEW ROOM," BRISTOL, 1783.

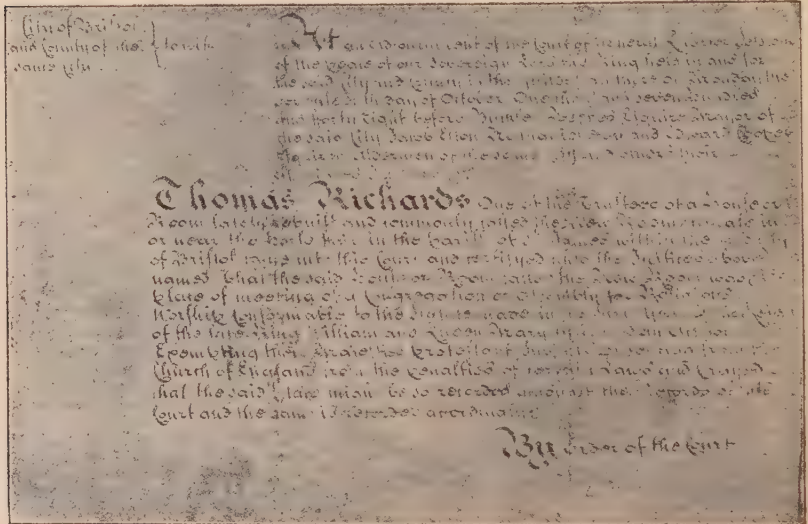
In which the expression "The Methodist Church" is used.

of parchment, to get his lawyers to compress so much matter into such small dimensions.

“Viewed in the light of outward appearances,” wrote William Arthur, “the enrollment of the Deed Poll of John Wesley would be one of the most commonplace of events. Viewed in the light of the attention given to it at the time by men of thought, of taste, or of affairs, it would rank as one of the most insignificant; not of more consequence than the execution of his will by an ordinary proprietor, or that of his deed of donation by the founder of some local charity. Viewed in the light of its moral intent, however, it rose to the rank of acts noble and wise. Viewed in its relations to Christianity as a collective body of Churches, it belonged to the category of great ecclesiastical events; and viewed in the light shed back upon it to-day by its historical results, as developed up to the present time, it must be placed among those pregnant acts in human affairs to which in successive generations other pregnant acts have to trace up their own origin.”

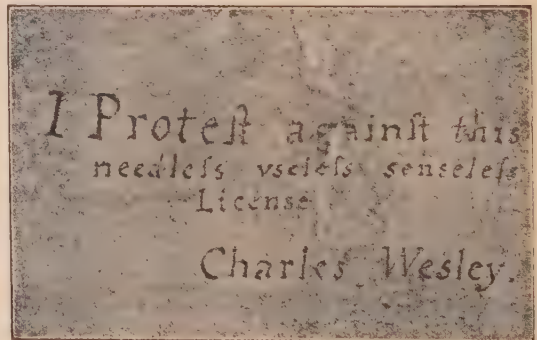
Three years after the enrollment of his memorable deed Wesley took another step by which, as Dr. Stoughton observes, “he became practically a Dissenter,” however strongly he might repudiate the term. He writes in his Journal, November 3, 1787: “I had a long conversation with Mr. Clulow on that execrable act called the Conventicle Act. After consulting the Act of Toleration, with that of the fourteenth of Queen Anne, we were both clearly convinced that it was the safest way to license all our chapels, and all our traveling preachers, not as Dissenters, but simply ‘Preachers of the Gospel;’ and that no justice or bench of justices has any authority to refuse licensing either the house or the preachers.” In other words, he placed all the chapels and ministers under the protection of “an act for exempting their majesties’ Protestant subjects, dissenting from the Church of England,

from the penalties of certain laws." The "New Room" had been so licensed as early as 1748, as the accompanying fac-



THE LICENSE OF THE "NEW ROOM," BRISTOL.

simile shows, and it will be observed that the license contains the words "Dissenting from the Church of England." This so annoyed Charles Wesley that he indorsed the license with his protest, as the facsimile also shows.



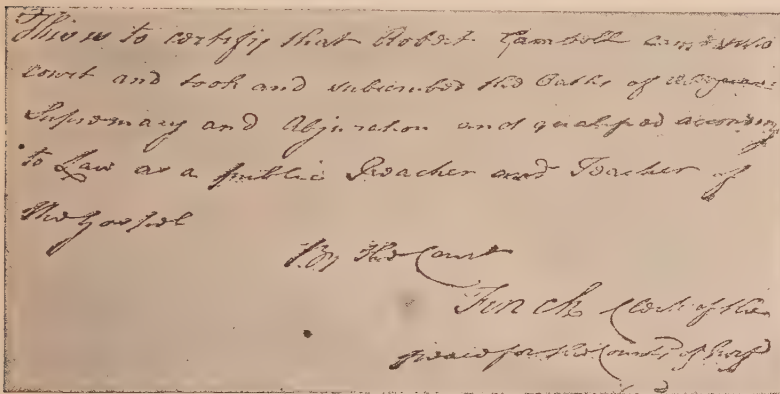
CHARLES WESLEY'S PROTEST.

Written on the back of the license of Bristol Chapel.

Under the license the chapels were shielded from damage, and interruptions in the worship could be stopped by the application of the law.

We also reproduce a portion of the preacher's license obtained at Norwich by Robert Gamble, whom Wesley ordained in 1788, and his certificate of ordination in the handwriting of Dr. Coke with Wesley's signature.

This certificate of ordination settles an important question. Wesley ordained Robert Gamble to "administer the holy sacraments," says the certificate. Yet the noted High Churchman, Dr. Pusey, in his letter to the Bishop of Ox-



ROBERT GAMBLE'S CERTIFICATE AS A PUBLIC PREACHER.

ford, says that "Wesley reluctantly took the step of ordaining at all;" and that "to the last he refused in the strongest terms his consent that those thus ordained should take upon them to administer the sacraments. He felt that it exceeded his powers, and so inhibited it, however it might diminish the numbers of the society he had formed." Writing some years ago, Dr. Stevens considered it "high time that such fictions should cease among English Churchmen. It seems they have yet to learn how thorough and noble a heretic Wesley was."

During the last six years of his life Wesley ordained many

of his preachers. In 1785 he says, "Having with a few select friends weighed the matter thoroughly, I yielded to

Know all Men by these Presents, that I John Wesley, Master of Arts, late of Lincoln-College in the University of Oxford, did, on the fifth Day of August in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty eight, by the Imposition of my hands and Prayer, and in the Fear of God, (being assisted by other ordained Ministers) set apart Robert Gamble for the Office of an Elder in the Church of God: whom I recommend to all to whom these Presents shall come, as a proper Person to administer the holy Sacraments and feed the Church of God. Given under my Hand and Seal, the tenth Day of August, in the Year above written.

John Wesley

CERTIFICATE OF ROBERT GAMBLE AS ELDER.

Ordained by John Wesley, August 5, 1788.

their judgment, and set apart three of our well-tried preachers, John Pawson, Thomas Hanby, and Joseph Taylor, to minister in Scotland." At the Conference of 1786 he ordained Joshua Keighley and Charles Atmore for Scotland, William Warrener for Antigua, William Hammet for Newfoundland. In 1787 five others were ordained, and in 1788, when in Scotland, he set apart John Barber and Joseph Cownley. He also ordained Alexander Mather, not only as elder, but also as bishop. On Ash Wednesday, 1789, Wesley ordained Henry Moore and Thomas Rankin, "not for Scotland or America any more than I am," Bradburn said, but for England; and in the words of Moore's certificate, "to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper according to the usages of the Church of England."

Since Dr. Pusey's day some Anglican writers have reluctantly recognized the true significance of Wesley's Poll Deed and ordinations. Mr. Bennett, an advanced High Anglican

of Frome, writes of "the Church's broken unity:" "John Wesley was compelled on many occasions to take part in actions which were palpably wrong, and which in his heart he abominated; to become actually in effect a schismatic, though at heart a Churchman; to be the author and founder of a great sect, though his mind was to do no more than save men's souls and bring them to the Church. He seems, indeed, at last to have laid aside all pretensions to the preservation of that unity (with the Church of England) which he had so long advocated, and, broken down by circumstances, to have yielded the whole fortress to the enemy."

After quoting many of Wesley's appeals to the Methodists against separation from the Church of England, Canon Overton asks: "But some years before Wesley uttered these words, had he not himself done the very thing which he deprecated? Consciously and intentionally, No! a thousand times no; but virtually, as a matter of fact, we must reluctantly answer, Yes. Lord Mansfield's famous dictum, 'Ordination is separation,' is unanswerable. When, in 1784, Wesley ordained Coke and Asbury to be superintendents, and Whatcoat and Vasey to be elders, he to all intents and purposes crossed the Rubicon."

With conspicuous fairness this able Anglican historian finds "the true explanation of Wesley's conduct in this matter in the intensely practical character of his mind. His work . . . seemed likely to come to a deadlock for want of ordained ministers. Thus we come back to the old notion. Everything must be sacrificed for the sake of his work. Some may think this was doing evil that good might come, but no such notion ever entered into Wesley's head; his rectitude of purpose, if not the clearness of his judgment, is as conspicuous in this as in the other acts of his life."



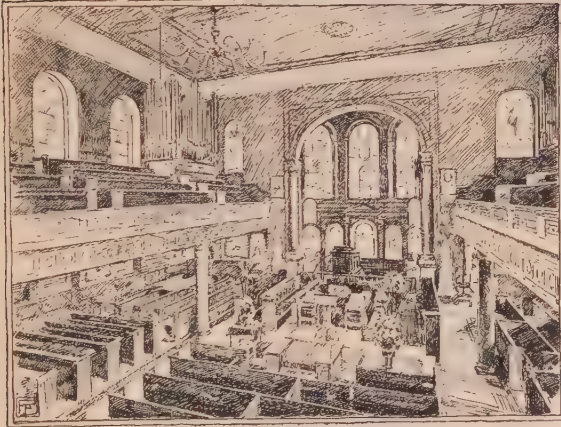
CHAPTER CIX

The Cathedral of Methodism and Wesley's Clergy House

THE OLD MOTHER CHURCH.—THE NEW CHAPEL IN CITY ROAD.—
THE DIVINE GLORY IN THE SANCTUARY.—AN HISTORIC HOUSE.—
ROUSING THE PREACHERS.—SOME PRECIOUS RELICS.

THE “cathedral of Methodism” for nearly forty years was the old Foundry in Moorfields, with its band room, soup kitchen, workshops, and its living church of more than two thousand members. The postage paid for Wesley's letters in the year 1774 to this busy center amounted to £40 3s. 1d.—no small item. The building was often so overcrowded that preacher and people left it for the open fields, and the crazy structure was costly to repair. In 1775 Wesley obtained from the city authorities a piece of land two hundred yards away from this old building, and on a stormy April day in 1777 he laid the foundation stone of the “new chapel” in City Road. His sermon on the occasion was fiercely criticised by Rowland Hill in the *Gospel Magazine*. On November 1, 1778, the chapel was opened. It was the first Methodist chapel built in London. The Foundry, when taken, had nothing ecclesiastical in its associations except that the great bell of St. Paul's was cast there. West Street, Spitalfields, and Wapping Methodist

chapels had been French Protestant churches built by the Huguenot refugees. The chapel at Snowsfields, Southwark, was owned by the Arians before it came into the hands of Wesley. City Road Chapel, moreover, was unequaled as a building throughout the connection.



DRAWN BY W. B. PRICE

FROM PHOTOGRAPHS.

INTERIOR OF CITY ROAD CHAPEL.

After the alterations, 1898.

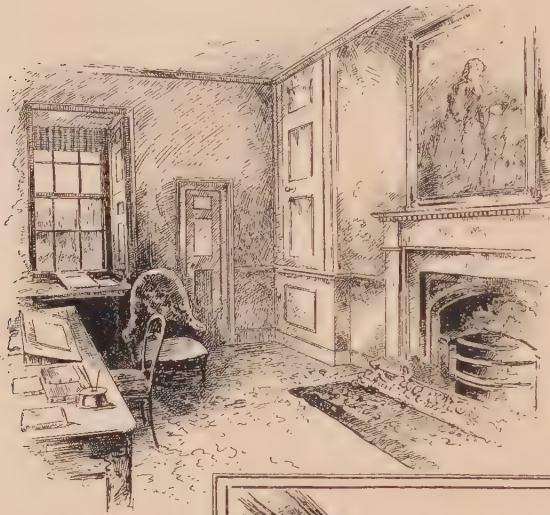
Before the fire, 1861.

Nearly ten years after its erection Joseph Benson wrote to Wesley that the George Yard Chapel, Hull, was equal to it. To this Wesley replied, "If it be at all equal to

the new chapel in London, I will engage to eat it." There was no danger of Wesley having to eat the chapel or to "eat his own words."

Two years after it was built the chapel narrowly escaped destruction by fire, as a characteristic entry by Wesley records:

“Waking between one and two in the morning, I observed a bright light shine upon the chapel. I easily concluded that there was a fire near, probably



in the adjoining timber yard [Mr. Tooth's]. If so, I knew it would soon lay us in ashes. I first called all the family to prayer. Then, going out, we found the fire about an hundred yards off, and had broke



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

FROM WOODCUTS.

STUDY IN WESLEY'S HOUSE.

out while the wind was south. But a sailor cried out, ‘Avast! avast! the wind is turned in a moment.’ So it did,

to the west, while we were at prayer, and so drove the flames from us. We then thankfully returned; and I rested well the residue of the night."

The glory of this "latter house" was as great as that of the former. Wonderful covenant services were held, and in the January of 1784, the Deed Poll year, eighteen hundred members were present. Next year we find the morning chapel filled with children to hear Wesley preach a sermon to the young at five o'clock on a bright July morning. Two weeks later the first London ordination service was held, and the deeply sol-

emnized congregation saw John Pawson, Thomas Hanby, and Joseph Taylor set apart "to administer the sacraments and feed the Church of God."

At one memorable sacramental service Charles Wesley made a sudden pause, and invited the congregation to unite with him in prayer for Fletcher, of Madeley. All present

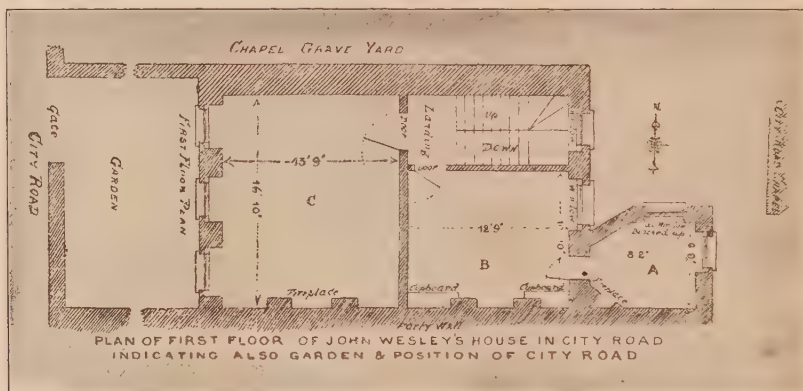


DRAWN BY G. WILLARD BONTE.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH.

WESLEY'S HOUSE, CITY ROAD, LONDON

were awed by the divine influence. A fortnight later Fletcher reported that he was administering the sacraments at Madeley at the same time, and the whole assembly was deeply impressed by the consciousness of the presence and power of God. On a Sunday morning in 1790, after reading the liturgy, John Wesley ascended the pulpit to preach,



when a rush of holy thought poured into his soul, and he stood for ten minutes in solemn silence, his eyes closed, his face lifted heavenward, and his hands clasped on the Bible. The large congregation gazed in silent wonder while the preacher held communion with God, reminding many present of Moses on Pisgah surveying the promised land. He then opened the hymn book and gave out with much tenderness his sainted brother's hymn:

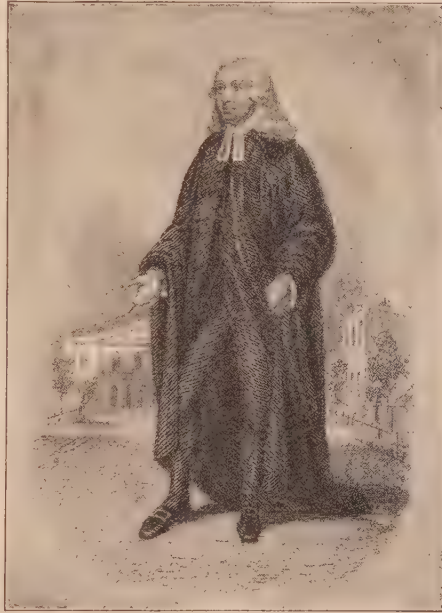
Come, let us join our friends above
That have attained the prize.

Never, perhaps, did any congregation more deeply realize the nearness and glory of the unseen world. A year later ten thousand persons passed through the chapel to look at the face of Wesley as he lay in his coffin the day before his

burial in the adjoining graveyard. The last hymn which Wesley gave out in the chapel was, "Ill praise my Maker while I've breath."

The liturgical and sacramental services at City Road chapel were conducted by the Wesleys and Dr. Coke, John Abraham, John Richardson, James Creighton (who assisted at the first ordinations), Peard Dickinson, formerly Mr. Perronet's curate, and Thomas Vasey, who was ordained in America and on his return lived in the little house now occupied by the chapel keeper. Vasey was the last robed clergyman who officiated regularly. Charles Wesley, who lived in London from 1771, almost monopolized the pulpit for some years, and thus practically excluded the ordained preachers, until the trustees and people protested.

A century after its erection the chapel was seriously injured by fire, and in the course of renovation was improved and adapted, but the shell of the building, the galleries and beams, the Communion table and rail, are all of Wesley's time. The font was from Fletcher's church at Madeley, and in the vestry Fletcher's study chair finds a place. Here also many other interesting mementos are preserved, such as



FROM A COPPERPLATE.

JOHN WESLEY.

The familiar frontispiece of the Wesleyan Hymnal, showing the chapel in the background.

Wesley's study chairs, the lectern from the Foundry, Charles Wesley's hymn book, and numerous letters, one of which reveals some of Wesley's difficulties with his preachers:

NOTTINGHAM.

MY DEAR BROTHER: I have the credit of stationing the preachers. But many of them go where they will go for all me. For instance, I have marked down James Oddie and John Nelson for Yarm Circuit the ensuing year; yet I am not certain that either of them will come. They can give twenty reasons for going elsewhere. Mr. Murlin says he must be in London. 'Tis certain he has a mind to be there. Therefore, so it must be; for you know a man of fortune is master of his own motions.

I am your affectionate brother,

J. WESLEY.

Twenty-one Conferences have been held in the chapel. At the one held in 1785 Wesley announced the appointment of Dr. Coke and Francis Asbury as joint superintendents for America. At the Conference of 1810 was reported the death of Thomas Rankin, who presided over the first American Conference. The first Ecumenical Conference was held in the building in 1881, when, as Bishop McTyeire said, Methodists came "trooping up from all parts of the world to see the old places."

Wesley's dwelling house still stands unaltered on the south side of the open space in the front of the chapel. He occupied the three rooms on the ground floor, and was head of the household of London preachers who dwelt above, as a significant entry in his Journal shows, December 9, 1787: "I went down at half an hour past five, but found no preacher in the chapel, though we had three or four in the house." [From the minutes of the Conference we may infer that these were Dr. Coke, Mr. Creighton, Samuel Bradburn, and John Atlay.] So I preached myself. Afterwards, inquiring why none of my family attended the morning preaching, they said it was because they sat up too late. I . . . therefore ordered that

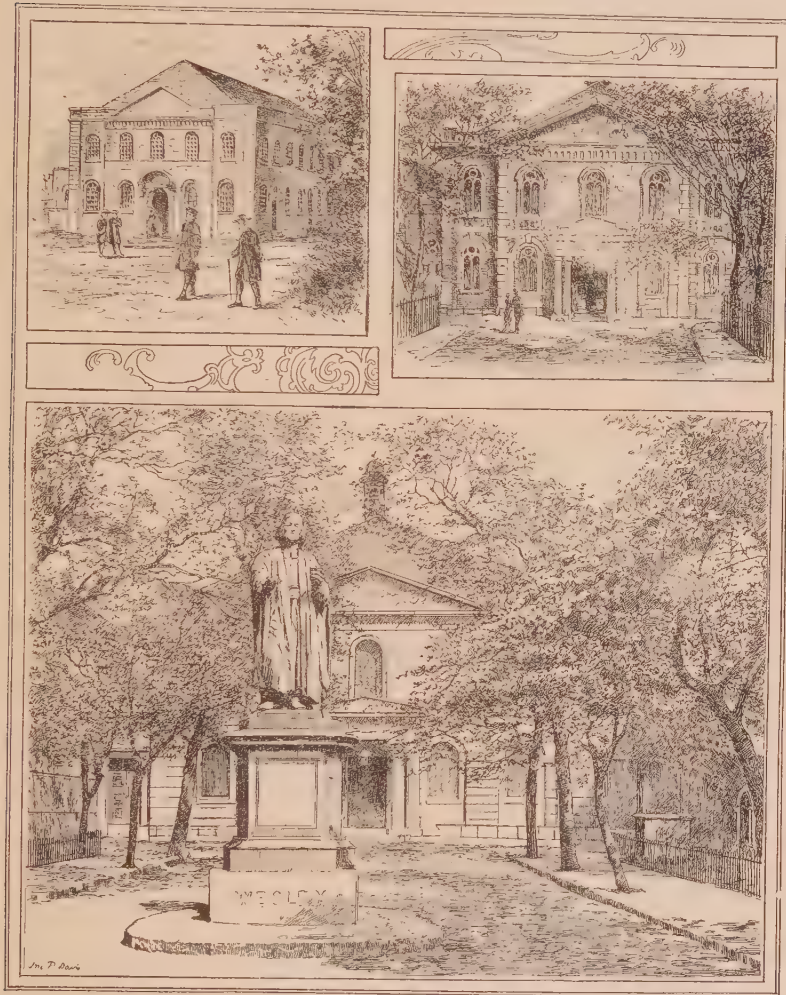


DRAWN BY J. O. NUGENT.

FURNITURE WHICH BELONGED TO JOHN WESLEY.

Still preserved in the City Road vestry and Wesley's house.

(1) everyone under my roof should go to bed at nine,
that (2) everyone might attend the morning preaching."



DRAWN BY J. P. DAVIS.

FROM WOODCUTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS.

WESLEY'S CHAPEL, CITY ROAD, LONDON.

As it appeared in 1778.

Where the Ecumenical Conference met, 1881.

City Road Chapel, 1900.

To this house came Robert Carr Brackenbury to read the

letters which Wesley handed him calling for help from the Channel Islands. "Here am I, send me," responded the heroic Lincolnshire squire. Hither came Dr. Coke to discuss Wesley's momentous proposal of ordination—although the ordination took place later in a private house at Bristol. Hither, also, often came Charles Wesley on his little horse, gray with age, to write and sing many of his hymns to the delighted household. And hither, too, came John Howard, the philanthropist, to spend an hour with John Wesley in memorable converse. And in the front room the founder of Methodism died. Can we wonder that the plain old dwelling is visited by troops of Methodists, who rejoice that in 1898 it was endowed as a permanent memorial of Wesley and a house for "Christian workers in the development of the spiritual and aggressive work connected with Wesley's chapel?"

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